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wife of the Austrian ambassador in Athens (pp. 376–384). Such brief intervals to the main storyline serve both to humanize Trikoupis and to provide relief from the typically ‘heavy’ political narrative that dominates the text.

In conclusion, one cannot but recognize the well-researched and timely contribution of Lydia Tricha to modern Greek historiography. One hopes that a shorter version, at least, will be translated into English as well. That way, Trikoupis could be interpreted comparatively to the other great European statesmen of his time, like Disraeli and Gladstone in Britain, Bismarck in Germany, Bach and Taaffe in Austria, and Stambulov in Bulgaria.

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Angelos Dalachanis *The Greek Exodus from Egypt: Diaspora Politics and Emigration, 1937–1962*. New York/Oxford: Berghahn, 2017. Pp. 274.
DOI:10.1017/byz.2019.6

Angelos Dalachanis created quite a stir by starting the Greek edition of this book with the emphatic statement “Δεν είμαι Αιγυπτιώτης.” Although his disclosure loses some of its potency in translation, by declaring that he is *not* a Greek from Egypt, Dalachanis presumably intended to highlight his lack of bias and distance himself from Greek Egyptians who have published on the subject of their homeland. With this in mind, I should probably mention that my father was a Greek from Egypt and the exodus described in this book directly affected three generations of my family. When recounting their experiences, my Greek Egyptian relatives never referred to an expulsion, a commonly held misconception that Dalachanis and others are trying to correct. Their decision to leave Egypt was clearly a matter of personal choice. Still, their actual motives were often unclear and with the passage of time many of their stories gave rise to questions which remained unanswered. Until now.

Numerous studies of the Greeks in Egypt have focussed on the super-rich cotton barons of Alexandria and a handful of other wealthy industrialists and benefactors. Most Greek Egyptians know very well that their story does not begin and end in the salons of the Benakis and Kotsikas families. Dalachanis’ book helps combat this delusion by introducing a large cast of protagonists made up of influential but lesser-known community leaders, educators, journalists and ordinary run-of-the-mill Greek Egyptians. His analysis of unpublished diplomatic sources reveals that in the post-Montreux era, and especially after World War II, successive Greek governments feared that an influx of impoverished Greek Egyptians would upset the fragile political and socioeconomic status quo in Greece. In response, community leaders, politicians and diplomats tried to prevent such an occurrence from taking place by diverting the flow of migrants in other directions. This uncomfortable truth has not gone down well in some quarters, but the evidence produced by Dalachanis is conclusive. As this book

makes clear, during the 1950s and 1960s thousands of Greek Egyptians uprooted themselves from their homeland and scattered across the globe to start new lives. And as Dalachanis points out, even for those who went to Greece, and many did in the end, the short trip across the Aegean signified not *επαναπατρισμός*, repatriation, but *εκπατρισμός*, expatriation.

According to Dalachanis, one of the main contributing causes of the exodus was the repeated failure of Greek Egyptian communities to readjust and adapt to the changing state of affairs in post-Montreux Egypt. As Egyptianisation policies gathered pace after World War II and a full command of the Arabic language became essential to secure a good job, graduates of the Greek community schools found themselves at a distinct disadvantage. Dalachanis argues that the Greek Egyptian leadership refused to countenance any significant changes to the Hellenocentric curricula of the community schools they controlled because students who emerged from that system had long provided the ideal workforce for their various business enterprises. Although he marshals some strong evidence to support this view, I am not certain that the élite's support of the community schools and the "bourgeois nationalist ideology" they propagated was quite so self-serving. It is true that the Greeks, like the other European communities in Egypt, failed to integrate on a linguistic basis until after the exodus. The lack of good local educational institutions, where Arabic was the language of instruction, was part of the problem. Egypt's Ottoman heritage must also be taken into account. For centuries Ottoman Christians and other minorities were obliged to organise and fund their own educational institutions. The foundations of the Greek educational system in Egypt were laid during the mid-late nineteenth century, when despite the Tanzimat reforms, little had changed in that respect. This helps explain why Greek models were preferred and an overtly Hellenocentric curriculum emerged and remained in place for decades. In countries where the host culture was Christian and European, for instance in Western Europe, Russia, and North America, integration with the host culture was easier. Within one or two generations Greek migrants tended to assimilate, a process that was hastened by attending local schools and abandoning their mother tongue.

The treatment of Greek nationals established in Egypt was a contentious and constantly evolving issue from the late nineteenth century onwards and quite understandably it is not fully addressed in Dalachanis' book. Still, one must keep in mind that the capitulatory privileges gradually abolished after 1937 did not apply to the thousands of Greeks who were local subjects, of disputed nationality or stateless. In this respect, their day to day concerns and their long-term outlook did not necessarily coincide with those of their compatriots who held Greek nationality. Even so, their exposure to the Hellenocentric Greek Egyptian educational system reinforced their sense of otherness. The reluctance of the Egyptian government to hand out citizenship to non-Muslim, non-Arabic speakers from the late 1920s onwards, and the difficulties faced by those who actually managed to obtain it, especially in employment matters, were further alienating factors. The anti-British and anti-Semitic animosity

which flared up during the first half of the twentieth century often descended into generic xenophobia which affected Greeks and engendered ambivalence and even hostility towards Egyptian nationalism. Many Greek Egyptians had come to the country to escape poverty, persecution and nationalist conflict. The fear of being targeted, losing everything and having to start over again from scratch would have been at the back of their minds when they took the decision to join the exodus.

One last point. A testimonial on the back cover of Dalachanis' book describes it as "an excellent, richly documented study of the final phase of the history of the Greeks in Egypt." I fully agree with the accolades, but the final phase of Greek Egyptian history begins after the exodus of the 1950s and 1960s. Active community life survived in Alexandria and especially Cairo well into the 1980s and even today churches, schools and philanthropic institutions continue to function in both cities.

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Theodora D. Patrona, *Return Narratives: Ethnic Space in Late-Twentieth-Century Greek American and Italian American Literature*. Madison: Farleigh Dickinson University Press/Rowman & Littlefield, 2017. Pp. xxxi, 173.
DOI:[10.1017/byz.2019.7](https://doi.org/10.1017/byz.2019.7)

Six novels, written in English by Italian Americans and Greek Americans over the past forty years, are examined in pairs in the three main sections of this book, 'the first comparative study of return works of the two literatures' (xiii). While Italian American Studies (and surveys of this type of literature) are well advanced, Greek American Studies has 'made slow but steady progress compared with the Italian American gallop' (155). The novels deal with attempts by female and male protagonists 'usually speaking for the authors themselves' (xix) to achieve a sense of self which acknowledges the contribution of their ethnic heritage to that self-definition. In these attempts, actual or metaphorical journeys of return are undertaken, and myth, folklore and story-telling play a key role. Changing perceptions of 'ethnic space' over the forty years spanned by these novels are highlighted. By 'ethnic space' is meant 'the spatial, geographical, and socio-cultural entity of the home country', that is, the place from which the protagonists' forebears emigrated, or which they themselves left.

It is important to note that the focus of the book is not so much on the novels themselves, but on the light they throw, comparatively, on the immigrant search for identity, in the light of ethnicity, gender, and the socio-historical contexts in which the immigrants live—economic and political aspects being crucial factors. Changes in their own perspectives on their identity are charted, from rejection (often in response to previous migrants' stereotypes of their origins), to 'mystification' (xiv) of their ethnic heritage. The analysis employs theories of 'literary and cultural criticism ranging from psychoanalysis to feminist theory, and postmodernist theories' (xiii).

a still all too rare example of how medieval Greek texts may be brought to bear on such questions, with lessons for Byzantinists and non-Byzantinists alike. For the most part, she avoids subjecting the reader to the now hypertrophied formulas of narratology. When she does, as with Gerard Genette's "transtextual" scheme, she opts for economy and illustrates its application concisely enough to make the case for its usefulness.

One aspect of this book which reviews like this risk neglecting, although it is the one which should most recommend *Raconter Byzance* to a broad gamut of readers, is its author's unassuming appreciation of the texts she discusses. N likes her texts, and not just because they offer a stage for her to sound smart, a not uncommon vice of literary scholars. N acknowledges that delight in the pleasures on offer in Byzantine literature does not come easy, though she hints at an embarrassing (and largely suppressed) consonance, at times, between our own literary expectations and those of Byzantine audiences. Given the unlikelihood of unmediated appreciation of any pre-modern literature, *Raconter Byzance* enacts the source of such delight for a contemporary reader. Spend some time with this book and you are likely to seek out and (re)read for yourself at least a few of the texts mentioned here. What more can we ask of a literary scholar?

Emmanuel Bourbouhakis
Princeton University

E. Cullhed (ed.), *Eustathios of Thessalonike Commentary on Homer's Odyssey*. Volume 1: *On Rhapsodies A-B*. Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet, 2016. Pp. xxx, 58*, 471.
DOI:[10.1017/byz.2019.2](https://doi.org/10.1017/byz.2019.2)

E. Cullhed's new edition of the *Commentary on Homer's Odyssey (Rhapsodies A-B)* of Eustathios of Thessalonike (c. 1115–1195) is an important contribution to classical and byzantine scholarship.

The *Commentary on the Odyssey*, as well as that on the *Iliad*, is organised in *parekbolai*, namely in a collection of texts from one or several sources. "Here, just as in the *Iliad*," so Eustathios writes at the end of the 'preface' to *Comm. Od.*, "our method of handling the subject matter will not be through exegesis, which others have concerned themselves with, but through collecting useful passages for those who run through the work and cannot easily permit themselves to go leisurely into the breadth of the poem. Many things relevant for the *Odyssey*, however, are passed over in silence in this commentary, because enough has already been said about them in the notes on the *Iliad*" (Cullhed's translation, 11).

The textual genesis of the *parekbolai* on the *Odyssey* has been long and complex. The analysis of the three manuscripts (autographs or at least produced under the author's eye) prove that they were not composed "in isolated operations from beginning to end, but resulted from processes of gradual accumulation of material that must have lasted for a number of years before they were eventually compiled into the texts as we know them" (5*). In fact, throughout his long life and even in the years he was archbishop of

Thessalonike (from 1178), Eustathios remained an active teacher and scholar and carried on working on his philological works. Probably those *Commentaries* began to be spread from 1168 and 1175/78. However, they also show traces of previous works too.

Eustathios, Master of Rhetoric in Constantinople (c. 1168), wrote the *Commentaries* conceiving them not as “a ‘popularizing’ piece, but a scholarly instrument” (11*) addressed to his students, with whom he kept contact through letters after he had moved to Thessalonike. Moreover, “Eustathios’ aim is not merely to ‘teach Homer’ but to amplify a didactic function perceived in the epics themselves” (12*). As Homer’s exegete, he adopts principles and methods certainly not new nor properly belonging only to him, but in such a way that “he appears to represent the zenith of a development in educational culture that had lasted for at least a century” (13*). In a close critical dialogue with his predecessors (Psellos) and contemporaries (Tzetzes, John the Deacon, Galenos), “through rhetorical analysis and allegoresis” Eustathios “engages with much more than the ABC of *grammatikē* and confidently ensures educated adults than they too will benefit from sitting in on the lessons offered in his commentaries” (17*).

The second part of the introduction (“Textual Witness and Editorial Principles”) is more technical, but by no means less important. The text of the *Commentary on the Odyssey* is transmitted by two manuscripts that Cullhed calls ‘authorial’, meaning that, if not autographs, they were at least prepared under Eustathios’ supervision: *Parisinus* gr. 2702 (= P) and *Marcianus* gr. 460 (= M). They have all the peculiarities of *Laurentiani* 59.2 and 59.3 (= L), which contain the *Commentary on the Iliad* seemingly written by the same scribe. The autographical problem of the three manuscripts remains *sub iudice*, because now Cullhed (38* n. 23) affirms himself to be “less sure” than he was in 2012 (*Mnemosyne* 65, 445–61). Remaining *codices integri* of the *Comm. Od.* and those with wide collections of *excerpta* were direct or indirect copies of M P. The relationship between M and P is properly examined with a focused analysis of the codicological structure of M, a more recent witness of P, in the irregular quires 6 and 27. All this leads Cullhed to assert with convincing arguments that M P derive from a unique lost manuscript exemplar (α).

The *editio princeps* of the *Comm. Od.*, published in Rome in 1549, was based on the *Vaticanus* gr. 1905, a copy of M collated with P. Cullhed summarises the main results of the editorial principles, which he had already discussed elsewhere (2016): “The authorial status of M P, combined with their stratigraphy and the interrupted revision process in M, means that the textual record offers differing textual versions for different parts of the text. [...] Therefore the edition will visually distinguish between two stages: before and after revisions” (55*). Cullhed prints the definitive version of the *Commentary* pointing out within double square brackets [...] the additions not included already in the first version; corrections (*marginalia et interlinearia*) are placed in the *apparatus criticus* followed by the designation “(corr.)”. Interlinear notes which are not additions or corrections “but part of the text itself as alternative endings are printed between the lines” (55*). Given his aim of limiting emendation only to textual errors,

but not mistakes, the conjectures are rare. Special attention is given to punctuation. There are three *apparati*: *apparatus locorum citatorum* (from Eustathios' work), *apparatus fontium et locorum parallelorum*, and *apparatus criticus*.

All that remains is to go into the reading, often tiring and sometimes boring but always useful, of the immense series of Eustathios' *parekbolai* on Homer's *Odyssey* (*Rhapsodies A-B*), preceded by his 'preface'. The text edition is excellent. The clear English translation facing the Greek text undoubtedly helps the reader.

The results of a modern edition of the first part of the *Commentary on the Odyssey*, parallel to that of the *Commentary on the Iliad* by M. van der Valk (1971–1987), are truly promising. Even with the awareness that the preparation of the *Commentary* in its entirety will take a long time, the hope of seeing it one day complete now appears to be concrete.

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Susan Ashbrook Harvey and Margaret Mullett (eds.), *Knowing Bodies, Passionate Souls: Sense Perceptions in Byzantium*. Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2017. Pp. 330.
DOI:[10.1017/byz.2019.3](https://doi.org/10.1017/byz.2019.3)

This volume constitutes a feast for most senses. The reader's eye is delighted by the beautiful book with the high quality printing and colour illustrations. The online accessed companion audio file is a pleasure for the ears. While turning the pages, one feels the touch of and smells the expensive paper. *Knowing Bodies, Passionate Souls* is the amplified outcome of the homonymous symposium organized at Dumbarton Oaks in 2014 by the editors.

The volume is timely and relevant, responding to the early twenty-first century "sensory turn" in the social sciences and humanities, heralded by David Howes ("Charting the Sensorial Revolution", *Senses and Society* 1.1 [2006]: 113–128). Surprisingly, neither Howes' works on the senses or those of Constance Classen, who examines the sensorium across history and cultures, are well represented in the volume's bibliography. Nevertheless, the volume is an extremely important addition to Byzantine studies in which, apart from sight, the senses have attracted little attention.

Knowing Bodies, Passionate Souls has six thematic parts framed by an introduction and a general index. The first five parts are organized around the five senses ("Sight", "Hearing", "Smell", "Taste" and "Touch") while the last part entitled "The Sensorium" includes contributions that are not devoted to a particular sense. All together, this is a substantive volume, with sixteen chapters on topics including literary studies, history, art history, architecture, archaeology, musicology and theology. The volume's scholarship is in general of high quality. I only have a few quibbles here and there.

Reviews

Ingela Nilsson, *Raconter Byzance: la littérature au XIIe siècle*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2014. Pp. 258.

DOI:[10.1017/byz.2019.1](https://doi.org/10.1017/byz.2019.1)

The twelfth century has led the rehabilitation of a once routinely maligned Byzantine literature at least since the late 1960's, when H. Hunger proposed a “reappraisal” of Komnenian literary culture; and, certainly, since the mid-80's, when A. Kazhdan published his influential pair of studies on the eleventh and twelfth centuries in Byzantium, accentuating an emergent humanism incubated in the literature of the period. Since then, the twelfth century has become the proving ground for the literary study of Byzantine texts. *Raconter Byzance* comes, at once, as the culmination of such efforts, and as a paradigm for what future study of Byzantine literature may still teach us. The book's thesis is at once simple and sweeping. Nilsson (henceforward “N”) contends that mid-century experiments in novel-length fiction represent, and may even have prompted, a reorientation of medieval Greek literature toward a new narrative poetics. N effectively turns Bakhtin on his head, placing the novel at the originating end of ‘novelization’ in Byzantium rather than as its consummation. In doing so, she illustrates the capacity of otherwise forgotten literary traditions to tell a different story from the one we have become accustomed to. As the double entendre of its title implies, *Raconter Byzance* describes both how the Byzantines told their own stories, and how we tell theirs and, by extension, our own. N sets the stage for her profile of twelfth-century narrative by briefly, albeit pointedly, recapitulating the cultural history of western perceptions of Byzantium. Even if you are unconvinced, as I am, by attempts to fold the story of Byzantium's reputation into that of a condescending European ‘orientalism’, you are still likely to agree with her that we must realign the frame through which we judge what histories are relevant to our modern predicament.

N begins her account of twelfth-century Byzantine narrative with the four new novels composed as part of a common, if not necessarily concerted, effort to revive a genre which had not lacked for readers in the millenium since the equally sudden appearance of ancient fiction. N distils her readings of these texts with the studied ease of a scholar with a long record of publication on the genre. She knows her mind with regard to these texts and does not need to rehearse every aspect of reasoning behind her arguments. She is notably convincing when describing how the form of these texts invited readers with knowledge of the ancient archetypes to participate in the performance of *mimesis*, staged in imaginatively and resourcefully imitative work. Free

to play with form, these fictional narratives heightened expectations surrounding the structure and style of storytelling. The new narrative idiom spread well beyond fiction. “D]’une manière ou d’une autre,” writes N, “les textes byzantins du XII^e siècle sont apparentés aux romans quant à leur forme narrative soigneusement structurée, quant à l’emploi de motifs spécifiques et de traits rhétoriques”(p.172).

Even if one were to dissent from this expansive conclusion, noting that a text with the narrative robustness of Anna Komnene’s *Alexias* was largely completed before the renaissance of the novel, one may still accept that the genre acted as a catalyst to greater narrative possibility. The novels inaugurated what N calls a *discours romanesque*, a combination of motifs and modes of exposition she discerns across an otherwise quite diverse cross section of texts that appealed to a common literary sensibility. Yet N also underscores that *discours romanesque* was not primarily a function of the novels’ erotic content. It was, rather, one of formal potential, including the potential generated by the presence of a diffuse desire within the plot of the saint’s life, historical accounts, or occasional speeches. For those not surprised to discover a *discours romanesque* in the narratively-bound genres of hagiography and historiography, with their strongly profiled protagonists and calculated ordering of events, N directs our attention to unexpected places, as well. She thus takes up the *Odoiporikon* of Konstantinos Manasses, a text she interprets in exemplary manner as part of the wider narrative fashion of its time, making a strong case for seeking the key to its meaning in its poetics rather than in its author’s biographical circumstances.

And yet, as interesting as N’s thesis will be to many, of potentially greater value to the wider discipline may be the book’s illustration of what a genuinely *literary* treatment of Byzantine texts can look like. For while the field has amassed many such readings on a smaller scale, book-length studies of texts *qua* literature remain few and far between. Consequently, N is forced to articulate the equivalent of first principles in the pursuit of systematic literary study. This is no small contribution to a field which has had only glancing experience of modern, albeit sometimes excessively theorized, approaches. She thus notes that while authorial biography can be valuable, it is not indispensable to rigorous inquiry. We can discuss what, and more importantly, *how* a text means, without knowing who its author was or what his motives were. Indeed, N offers individual readings of texts, even as she locates them in a wider pattern of narrative emplotment. She is also quick to underline that formal similarities do not render the varied aims of texts, including their respective truth claims, moot; a point sometimes lost on those keen to blur generic boundaries by showcasing the artifice of all narrative. However, she is equally adamant when observing that we cannot disentangle historical content –some core of events or facts– from narratively constructed literary form. The past is simply not perceivable outside narrative.

Yet with so little of narratology’s theoretical framework having originated in the study of medieval texts, and hardly any from medieval Greek literature, Byzantinists have been wary, when not outright dismissive, of such approaches. N’s study stands as

a still all too rare example of how medieval Greek texts may be brought to bear on such questions, with lessons for Byzantinists and non-Byzantinists alike. For the most part, she avoids subjecting the reader to the now hypertrophied formulas of narratology. When she does, as with Gerard Genette's "transtextual" scheme, she opts for economy and illustrates its application concisely enough to make the case for its usefulness.

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Emmanuel Bourbouhakis
Princeton University

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‘Literary Evenings’ at the Greek National Theatre, 1945–6: popular education and the literary canon¹

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This article recounts the little-known story of the ‘Literary Evenings’ (1945–6), a series of literary recitals staged at the Greek National Theatre and organized by members of the Generation of the 1930s. Set against the background of intense political rivalry that followed the Varkiza Agreement, the ‘Literary Evenings’ capture the post-war aspirations for the popularization of high culture. Drawing upon hitherto unexplored archival material, this article aims to offer a new, historically informed understanding of the Generation of the 1930s, while also directing attention to the aural consumption of literary texts as an unacknowledged force behind canon formation.

Keywords: Greek National Theatre; Generation of the 1930s; Greek liberalism; oral poetry; popularization; literary canonization

After the end of the Second World War, prominent intellectuals across Europe shared a desire for popular education and culture, which was informed by progressive Resistance ideals.² Speaking of the cultural reconstruction of post-war Europe, Nicholas Hewitt argues that ‘it is essential to limit the period under analysis from 1945 to 1950, when

1 This article builds on research conducted for my doctoral thesis ‘Poetry in performance in postwar Greece, 1945–1965’, King’s College London, 2018. I am grateful to Professor David Ricks, my thesis supervisor, and to Professor Peter Mackridge and Dr Polina Tambakaki for their valuable comments on various drafts of this article. I owe special thanks to Professor Dimitris Papanikolaou for inviting me to present my work on canon formation at the University of Oxford, where some of my ideas were refined. I would also like to thank Professor Georgia Gotsi and an anonymous referee for their constructive suggestions. I am indebted to Dr Maria Georgopoulou, Director of the Gennadius Library at Athens, and to the library’s archivists and staff for their generous assistance with my research. My gratitude also goes to the Board of the National Theatre of Greece for granting me permission to visit its archive and reproduce unpublished material. Finally, I would like to thank the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens for permission to consult its Historical Archive.

2 For this movement in France, see, for instance, B. Rigby, ‘The reconstruction of culture: People et Culture and the popular education movement’, in N. Hewitt (ed.), *The Culture of Reconstruction: European Literature, Thought and Film, 1945–50* (Basingstoke 1989) 140–52; for similar concerns in post-war Italy,

the debates on the directions in which European culture should go were at their height'.³ In the case of Greece, however, this intense cultural activity lasted even less, due to the outbreak of the Greek Civil War (1946–9), whose prelude occurred in December 1944, when fighting broke out in Athens between the communist-led resistance organization, the National Liberation Front (EAM), and British troops supporting the government—a conflict known as the *Dekemvriana*. Hence, in order to grasp the fleeting moment when the turbulent political reality had not yet fully overshadowed the demand for popularizing high culture, I will focus my attention on the immediate post-Liberation period, that is, on the one-year period between the ceasefire agreement signed between the government and EAM on 12 February 1945 (the Varkiza Agreement) and the parliamentary elections held on 31 March 1946, which signalled the beginning of full-fledged civil war. Recent studies have come to define this period as the period of 'white terror', due to the acts of violence against known or suspected communists.⁴

Despite this atmosphere, the optimistic voices that expressed their faith in a future society where people would have equal access to culture not only permeated Greek public discourse, but seem to have inspired a number of educational/cultural projects. One of the most characteristic projects of this period is the 'Literary Evenings' (*Λογοτεχνικές Απογευματινές*), a series of performances of literary texts established by the Greek National Theatre (hereafter NT) during the 1945–6 season. This literary-theatrical project has not, to date, received any scholarly attention, even though it offers an illuminating case study of both the institutional strategies used to popularize literature, and the mechanisms of literary canonization in post-war Greece.

Perhaps the reason for this conspicuous critical neglect lies with the nature of the project itself; standing at a crossroads between theatre and literary studies, it has escaped the attention of scholars from both disciplines alike. On the one hand, studies which centre on the theatrical life of this period refer to this project in passing, without elaborating on its pedagogical aims in light of the context of cultural reconstruction, or its content in relation to the contemporaneous developments in the field of literature.⁵ Literary historians, on the other hand, scarcely take into account the presence of modern Greek literature outside the printed book.⁶ Exceptions to this are studies which focus on the transposition of literature into popular media, such as

see S. Gundle, 'The Communist Party and the politics of cultural change in postwar Italy, 1945–50', in Hewitt (ed.), *The Culture of Reconstruction*, 12–36.

3 'Introduction' in Hewitt (ed.), *The Culture of Reconstruction*, 4.

4 See, for instance, D. H. Close, *The Origins of the Greek Civil War* (London and New York 1995) 150–88.

5 See the few lines devoted to this project in G. Koukourikou, 'Ελληνικό θέατρο και ιστορία. Από την Κατοχή στον Εμφύλιο (1940–1950)', unpublished PhD thesis, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2001, 137–8; E. Stamatoropoulou, *Το νεοελληνικό θέατρο στα χρόνια της καθεκτικής δημοκρατίας, 1944–1967. Η πολιτική ρεπερτορίου των αθηναϊκών επαγγελματικών θιάσων πρόζας (Τόμος Α': 1944–1955)* (Athens 2017) 35.

6 Consider, for instance, Argyriou's imposing eight-volume *Ιστορία της νεοελληνικής λογοτεχνίας και η πρόσληψή της* (Athens 2001–7) which focuses exclusively on the study of printed sources (books and literary journals).

Papanikolaou's *Singing Poets*, which traces the intersections of poetry and popular music in France and Greece. Yet, even though Papanikolaou discusses the circulation of French poetry in oral formats during the 1940s, he situates the Greek manifestations of this phenomenon at a much later stage, particularly in the late 1950s.⁷

However, identifying earlier attempts to popularize poetry through performance, such as the 'Literary Evenings', can inform our understanding of the succeeding projects of the late 1950s and early 1960s. Commenting on the 1960s musical settings of poetry, Papanikolaou juxtaposes the 'popular politics' of the leftist composer Mikis Theodorakis with the eclecticism of the poets of the Generation of the 1930s, interpreting Theodorakis' strategy of 'returning high culture to the people, bringing poetry to the masses' as an 'effort to force the cut-off bourgeois poets to communicate with the people'.⁸ Striking a similar note, Garantoudis claims that the practices of the Generation of the 1930s lacked the popularizing impulse of the cultural projects of the Greek Left; speaking of the recitation anthologies published by EAM in the mid-1940s (which will be examined below in parallel with the 'Literary Evenings'), Garantoudis views them as an effort to reconnect performed poetry with the public, adding that such initiatives 'belong to a politico-ideological space which is totally incompatible with the views of bourgeois poets, like Seferis, on poetry and its recitation'.⁹

This article aims to demonstrate that the Generation of the 1930s was far more receptive to ideas of popular and performed poetry than previous studies have acknowledged. The relatively unknown involvement of leading members of this generation in the operation of the NT in 1945–6 throws new light on the cultural and political agenda of this generation, elucidating more fully both its ideological position and its relations with popular culture. A key figure in this venture was the novelist Giorgos Theotokas, who was appointed director-general of the NT shortly after the Varkiza Agreement. For a group of authors that has long been the focus of extensive scholarly attention, it is curious that one of its rare collective exertions has hitherto gone unnoticed.¹⁰ Treating the 'Literary Evenings' as a project that bore the definite imprint of the Generation of the 1930s, this article departs from the view of this generation as an 'abstract scheme, critical construct and rhetorical invention',¹¹ showing that, at least in the post-Liberation period, these authors indeed acted as a coherent group which attempted to reach wider audiences and influence popular taste.

7 See D. Papanikolaou, *Singing Poets: Literature and Popular Music in France and Greece* (Oxford 2007) 78–99.

8 Op. cit., 89.

9 E. Garantoudis, 'Η ποίηση ως ζωντανός λόγος. Από την απαγγελία στην προφορική ανάγνωση', in *Από τον μοντερνισμό στη σύγχρονη ποίηση, 1930–2006* (Athens 2007) 160.

10 Even the term 'Generation of the 1930s' is strikingly absent from all accounts of Theotokas' first term at the NT; see, for instance, K. Petrakou, *Ο Θεοτοκάς του θεάτρου. Έργα, θεωρία και κριτική, δράση* (Athens 2017) 379–401; A. Kastrinaki, *Η λογοτεχνία στην παραγμένη δεκαετία 1940–1950* (Athens 2005) 365–6.

11 D. Tziouvas, *Ο μύθος της γενιάς του τριάντα. Νεοτερικότητα, ελληνικότητα και πολιτισμική ιδεολογία* (Athens 2011) 544. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.

And while the popularizing character of the ‘Literary Evenings’ reflects the broader cultural and intellectual tendencies of this period, the question of their repertoire, i.e. the texts chosen to be performed, is directly linked to the issue of literary canonization, introducing an aspect that is rarely addressed in the existing—Greek or international—literature on the topic: the aural dissemination of literary works. In particular, discussions concerned with canon formation base their assumptions on traditional printed sources (textbooks, histories, anthologies), paying little, if any, attention to the circulation of literary texts via non-print media (live readings, radio broadcasts, sound recordings).¹² Even in the few cases where vocal performances of printed texts are acknowledged as an important part of an author’s reception and public image, such considerations usually apply to individual case studies,¹³ and no systematic attempt has been made to assess the overall impact of the non-print appearances of literature on the construction of national literary canons. The study of the ‘Literary Evenings’ underlines the fact that different versions of the canon coexisted within the same period, of which the ones relying upon the printed form of the text were simply one part.

In what follows, I will try to situate the ‘Literary Evenings’ within their historical and literary context, drawing mostly on unpublished material located in the NT’s Archive.¹⁴ More specifically, the first part of this article (‘Off-stage politics’) will discuss the backstage activity that framed the launch of the ‘Literary Evenings’, focusing on the NT’s attempts to maintain equilibrium amidst a highly polarized political setting. The second part (‘The European model’) will trace the origins of the ‘Literary Evenings’, bringing to the fore the internationalist scope of the NT administration as well as its influence from the practices of the French state theatre. The third part (‘Popularization’) will discuss the objectives of the ‘Literary Evenings’ in light of the educational and cultural policy of both the official state and the Left. Finally, the fourth part (‘Canonization’) will delve into the repertoire of the ‘Literary Evenings’, questioning whether the choice of texts ultimately reinforced canonical values or proposed an alternative version of the literary canon.

Off-stage politics

Less than a month after the Liberation of Athens, Georgios Papandreou, head of the Government of National Unity, ordered the indefinite closure of both the NT and the

12 Indicative in this respect is J. Guillory’s seminal study *Cultural Capital: The Problem of Literary Canon Formation* (Chicago and London 1993), which uses as its primary data school and university syllabuses.

13 It seems that the issue of performance enters the discussion either in relation to nineteenth-century literary practices, or in relation to individual authors who have a reputation for being prolific reciters; see, for instance, G. Papatheodorou, *Ρομαντικά πεπρωμένα. Ο Αριστοτέλης Βαλαωρίτης ως ‘εθνικός ποιητής’* (Athens 2009), in particular 241–323, and A. Vogiatzoglou, *Η γένεση των πατέρων. Ο Σικελιανός ως διάδοχος των εθνικών ποιητών* (Athens 2005) 127–62.

14 Strangely, although the largest part of this Archive was recently digitized (2008–11), all files related to the ‘Literary Evenings’ (printed programmes, newspaper clippings, etc.) were left out of this process, and do not currently appear in the NT’s online database (<http://www.nt-archive.gr/>). Accessed 1 March 2019.

National Opera and called for their immediate reorganization.¹⁵ Vasilis Kanakis, one of the few chroniclers of the NT's history, blames this development on the internal conflict that had broken out between two leftist actors of the troupe, Giorgos Glinos and Tzavalas Karousos, who, bypassing the authority of the appointed director-general, Nikolaos Laskaris, were engaged in a struggle for dominance.¹⁶ Press reports did not go into such detail, but pointed to the declining artistic standards of the NT's wartime productions, which had allegedly caused general disappointment: 'Athenian intellectual circles fully endorse the government's decision to close down the National Theatre until its reorganization and return to its former artistic path, from which it deviated during the occupation'.¹⁷

Such an unreserved alignment with Papandreou's policy was perhaps to be expected, given that the above lines appeared in the pro-government daily *Καθημερινά Νέα*, run by a close associate of Papandreou, Loukis Akritas, who at the time served as undersecretary for Press and Information. A regular contributor to *Καθημερινά Νέα* was the succeeding director-general of the NT, Theotokas. In his articles from the early post-Liberation days, Theotokas openly supported Papandreou, arguing that his opposition to political fanaticism might prove highly beneficial to the country, preventing the possibility of civil war.¹⁸ It is thus plausible that Theotokas' appointment at the NT was related to his personal ties to Papandreou;¹⁹ the theatre director Sokratis Karandinos, a member of the NT's Artistic Committee during the war, recalls that, in the spring of 1944, Theotokas received a message from the government-in-exile, asking him to prepare a plan for the post-war reconstruction of the NT.²⁰ This information does not appear in Theotokas' diary, which instead recounts that, shortly after the Liberation, Papandreou offered him a place in public office.²¹

In any case, the events of the *Dekemvriana*, and Papandreou's ensuing resignation, postponed the reorganization of state institutions. It was after the formation of a new government under the centrist Nikolaos Plastiras that the Minister of Education,

15 See 'Ο νόμος διά το "Εθνικόν"', *Καθημερινά Νέα*, 4 Nov. 1944.

16 See V. Kanakis, *Εθνικό Θέατρο. Εξήντα χρόνια σκηνή και παρασκήνιο* (Athens 1999) 49. For acts of resistance at the occupied NT, see P. Mavromoustakos, *Το θέατρο στην Ελλάδα 1940–2000. Μια επισκόπηση* (Athens 2005) 43–4.

17 'Το Εθνικόν Θέατρον', *Καθημερινά Νέα*, 4 Nov. 1944; also quoted in Kanakis, *Εθνικό Θέατρο*, 53.

18 See, for instance, G. Theotokas, 'Ο "τύπος Παπανδρέου"', *Καθημερινά Νέα*, 19 Nov. 1944, republished in G. Theotokas, *Πολιτικά κείμενα* (Athens 1976) 401–2.

19 In 1942, Theotokas' text 'Ideological directions' served as a manifesto for Papandreou's Democratic Socialist Party; see E. Hatzivassiliou, *Ελληνικός φιλελευθερισμός. Το ριζοσπαστικό ρεύμα, 1932–1979* (Athens 2010) 142.

20 See S. Karandinos, 'Ο Θεοτοκάς στο Κρατικό Θέατρο Βορείου Ελλάδος', *Νέα Εστία* 1114 (1973) 1634; this is also mentioned in Petrakou, *Ο Θεοτοκάς του θεάτρου*, 380.

21 '[...] he [Papandreou] took me aside and asked me from which position I would like to offer my services', diary entry, dated 18 Oct. 1944; G. Theotokas, *Τετράδια ημερολογίου, 1939–1953*, ed. D. Tziouvas (Athens 2014) 501.

Konstantinos Amantos, invited Theotokas to become director-general of the NT.²² A drastic intervention in the public sphere might contribute to the quick recovery of the nation, or, at least, this is what Theotokas had in mind when he took up that post in February 1945: ‘the proposal was acquiring the character of an intellectual recruitment in times of national crisis’, as he argued.²³ Next to Theotokas, other distinguished intellectuals served either as members of the Administrative Board, or as members of the Artistic Committee, or even offered their assistance voluntarily in the preparation of individual projects.

In particular, the members of the NT’s Administrative Board included Panagiotis Kanellopoulos (vice-president), G. K. Katsimbali (secretary-general), Theodoros Synadinos, Kostas Karthaios, Nikos Hadjikyriakos-Gkikas, and George Seferis (members). In the Artistic Committee we encounter Angelos Terzakis (director of repertoire), Petros Charis, Leon Koukoulas and Michael Rodas (who later resigned and was replaced by Takis Papatsonis),²⁴ as well as the NT’s directors, Sokratis Karandinos and Pelos Katselis (fig. 1). With regard to the project under discussion, the programmes of the ‘Literary Evenings’ reveal that the following were responsible for arranging the repertoire: Theotokas, K. Th. Dimaras, and the poets Odysseus Elytis and Nikos Gatsos. Also, it was under Theotokas that the NT began recruiting painters, such as Nikos Engonopoulos and Yannis Tsarouchis, as set and costume designers. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that Theotokas insisted on portraying his term at the NT as a ‘collective intellectual endeavour’.²⁵

The marked presence of authors who are linked with the Generation of the 1930s should be viewed as part of the broader attempts of this literary group to shape national cultural politics after the Liberation. In addition to the NT, another site apparently associated with the post-Liberation activity of the Generation of the 1930s was the National Radio Foundation (EIR). In 1945, Seferis, at that time director of Archbishop Damaskinos’ political bureau, contributed to the reorganization of the national broadcasting network by preparing the new broadcasting legislation and serving as a member of EIR’s first Administrative Board.²⁶ In the same period, both Elytis and the literary critic Andreas Karandonis joined EIR — ‘encouraged by Seferis’,

22 The literary and theatre critic Aimilios Chourmouziotis would later insinuate that Amantos’ decision to appoint Theotokas was influenced by their common origin from the island of Chios; see A. Chourmouziotis, ‘Το Εθνικό Θέατρο (Ένας έλεγχος και μια προοπτική)’, *Φιλολογικά Χρονικά* 43 (1946) 225–6.

23 G. Theotokas, ‘Η πρώτη μεταπολεμική περίοδος του Εθνικού Θεάτρου (Απολογισμός)’, *Νέα Εστία* 451 (1946) 460.

24 In October 1945, Papatsonis too resigned due to workload, and was replaced by the theatre historian Giannis Sideris; see National Theatre of Greece, Archive, Administrative Board Meeting Minutes, 16 Oct. and 13 Nov. 1945.

25 G. Theotokas, ‘Η λογοτεχνία προς το λαό’, *Καθημερινά Νέα*, 11 Nov. 1945, republished in G. Theotokas, *Πολιτικά κείμενα*, 178–80.

26 On the role of the Generation of the 1930s in mid-century Greek radio programming, see F. Antonelaki, *Ποίηση στο ραδιόφωνο, 1945–1960. Πολιτιστική πολιτική και οι ποιητές της ‘γενιάς του τριάντα’*. Available online: [https://www.miet.gr/userfiles/b43b6205-bc09-4b97-8795-a6b100f44a81/Ποίηση στο ραδιόφωνο \(PDF\).pdf](https://www.miet.gr/userfiles/b43b6205-bc09-4b97-8795-a6b100f44a81/Ποίηση στο ραδιόφωνο (PDF).pdf). Accessed 10 June 2019.

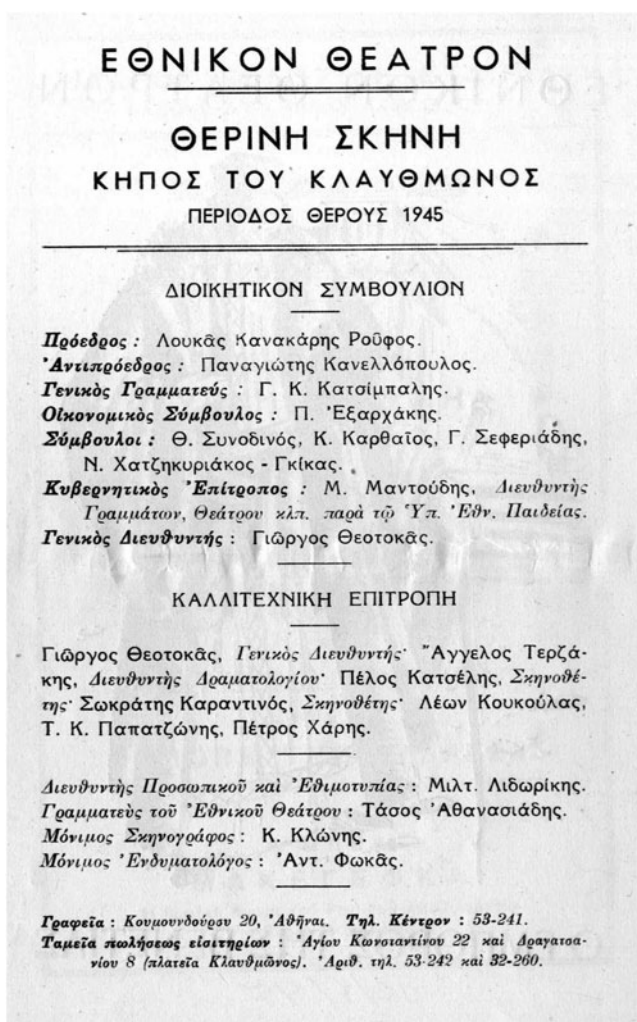


Fig. 1. National Theatre Board/Artistic Committee, 1945. © National Theatre of Greece.

as Elytis later admitted.²⁷ Parallel to their involvement in state cultural institutions, several members of this literary group collaborated with centrist newspapers of the day: Theotokas, Terzakis and Gatsos contributed to *Καθημερινά Νέα*,²⁸ and Elytis wrote a series of articles for the daily *Ελευθερία*, published by Panos Kokkas.²⁹

27 O. Elytis, 'Το χρονικό μιας δεκαετίας' (1974) in *Ανοιχτά χαρτιά* (Athens 2009) 435.

28 Terzakis' daily column ('Στο φτερό της πέννας') gave amusing snippets of Athenian everyday life; Theotokas' and Gatsos' articles, which ranged from aesthetic to sociopolitical topics, appeared in the Sunday issue of the newspaper. A selection of Theotokas' articles (1944–7) can be found in the volume *Πολιτικά κείμενα*; the absence of other theoretical writings underlines the need to catalogue and analyse Gatsos' contributions to *Καθημερινά Νέα* (June–Sept. 1945).

29 M. Psalti offers a brief exposition of these articles, though without situating them in the broader context of the post-Liberation activity of the Generation of the 1930s; see M. Psalti, 'Ο Ελύτης ως μεταπολεμικός

A central (and common) aspect of their newspaper contributions was their condemnation of political polarization; speaking of the current responsibilities of Greek intellectuals, Elytis argued that ‘escaping the clashing orthodoxies (‘Συμπληγάδες των ορθοδοξιών’)

is the primary goal that every bright mind needs to accomplish’.³⁰ Similarly, Gatsos concluded that youth would find its way to freedom by ‘ignoring and bypassing the dogmas and orthodoxies of our times which are suitable only for the Middle Ages’.³¹ Equally appalled by the ‘two abnormally swollen political extremes’, Theotokas declared that ‘we do not want violence, we do not want fanaticism. We refuse to accept that, in order to straighten out the affairs of this ill-fated country, a huge amount of hate, madness and blood needs to be expended’.³² According to Theotokas, it was the same desire to appease political passions that primarily informed his policy as director-general of the NT:

Everyone should feel that a spirit of justice, impartiality and freedom prevails within the workplace, and that no one will be sidelined for ideological, partisan or personal reasons [...] It is the simple, healthy method of applied Democracy, which we wanted to transfer, without any distortion, to this small sector of public life.³³

This claim of commitment to democracy was evidently matched by a series of analogous actions. In early 1945, as the NT troupe reassembled after the *Dekemvriana*, Theotokas decided to rehire three leftist actors (Tzavalas Karousos, Andonis Giannidis and Giorgos Pappas), despite the reservations expressed by some members of the Administrative Board.³⁴ Moreover, a leading figure of the Greek Left, Kostas Varnalis, was also recruited by the NT as a translator of Aristophanes’ *Clouds*.³⁵ Lastly, the Board rejected a request to install a wall plaque to commemorate the death of the NT actress Eleni Papadaki, who was murdered during the *Dekemvriana*, finding this gesture ‘premature’.³⁶

Despite this evidence of a moderate policy, it was not long before the NT was accused of promoting particular political agendas; the NT took the first blow in June 1945, when the on-stage appearance of Karousos provoked violent reactions from members of the anticommunist ‘X’ organization, who were among the audience. This incident was

επιφυλλιδογράφος. Τα πολιτικά του κείμενα στην εφημερίδα *Ελευθερία*, *Νέα Ευθύνη* 23 (2014) 305–16, and ‘Τέσσερις αθησαύριστες πολιτικές επιφυλλίδες του Ελύτη στην εφημερίδα *Ελευθερία*, *Νέα Ευθύνη* 34–5 (2016) 267–80.

30 O. Elytis, ‘Πνεύμα και πολιτική’, *Ελευθερία*, 22 July 1945.

31 N. Gatsos, ‘Το δράμα της νεότητος’, *Καθημερινά Νέα*, 30 Sept. 1945.

32 G. Theotokas, ‘Το δράμα των ελεύθερων ανθρώπων’, *Καθημερινά Νέα*, 1 July 1945.

33 G. Theotokas, ‘Η πρώτη μεταπολεμική περίοδος του Εθνικού Θεάτρου’, 462.

34 See Board Meeting Minutes, 3 April 1945.

35 See Board Meeting Minutes, 1 May 1945.

36 ‘Το Συμβούλιον αποφαινεται αρνητικώς [...] θεωρών πρόωρον έτι την ενέργειαν ταύτην’; Board Meeting Minutes, 15 May 1945; also quoted in Petrakou, *Ο Θεοτοκάς του Θεάτρου*, 388.

part of a coordinated attack which was mainly directed against the leftist 'United Artists' theatre company.³⁷ Still, the fact that these assaults reached the national stage implies that, within this electrified political atmosphere, the NT's moderate agenda ran the risk of being interpreted as pro-communist.

The noose tightened even more around the NT after the elections of March 1946, from which the Communist Party abstained, leading to a distinct victory for the royalist People's Party (*Λαϊκόν Κόμμα*). From its new position of strength, the right-wing press unleashed a harsh polemic against the NT, accusing it of promoting alleged communists, such as Nikos Kazantzakis and Angelos Sikelianos. For instance, the daily *Εστία* objected to the staging of Kazantzakis' play *Καποδίστριας*, expressing concerns about the next steps of the NT: 'Will the meagre resources of the people continue to be wasted on [the production of] ridiculous plays of "comrades" who praise each other?'.³⁸ Under these suffocating pressures, Antonios Papadimos, Minister of Education in the new government, reinstated the 1930 National Theatre Act, with the excuse that all subsequent laws had been enacted by authoritarian regimes. On a practical level, the return to the prewar legislation led to the immediate dismissal of the NT administration.³⁹ In May 1946, Theotokas was replaced by the former NT director Dimitris Rondiris, who was favoured by the new government.⁴⁰ The right-wing press greeted this development with satisfaction, as is evident in pompous headlines such as: 'The National Theatre returns to Greece. The communist mob is permanently dismissed' (fig. 2).⁴¹

At the final meeting of the outgoing administration, Seferis referred to this headline, in order to condemn the blatant intrusion of party politics into essentially intellectual matters:

Nobody has the right to monopolize Hellenism, and, all the more so, as happens in some cases of this nasty polemic, when the monopolizers are a disgrace to this nation. This is not real public opinion, but a tactic that aims to subordinate the

37 On this series of assaults, see 'Το πνεύμα σε διωγμό', *Ελεύθερα Γράμματα* 8 (1945) 1–2. On the short-lived troupe of the 'United Artists' ('Ενωμένοι Καλλιτέχνες') and its connections with EAM, see G. Koukourikou, 'Ελληνικό θέατρο και ιστορία', 147–60; Stamatopoulou, *Το νεοελληνικό θέατρο στα χρόνια της καθεκτικής δημοκρατίας*, 93–106.

38 'Θέατρον ή φαρμακείον', *Εστία*, 10 April 1946.

39 For the written protest against this ministerial decision, signed, among others, by Sikelianos, Kazantzakis, Elytis, Karandonis and I. M. Panagiotopoulos, see the full text in G. Theotokas, *Τετράδια ημερολογίου*, 554–5.

40 Symptomatic of the NT's vulnerability to political manipulation is the fact that, when a centrist government was formed after the 1950 elections, Theotokas returned to his position as director-general, only to be replaced again by Rondiris after the 1952 elections, won by a right-wing party; for Theotokas' second term at the NT see Theotokas, *Τετράδια ημερολογίου*, 627–81; see also Petrakou, *Ο Θεοτοκάς του θεάτρου*, 401–25.

41 *Ελληνικόν Αίμα*, 30 April 1946.

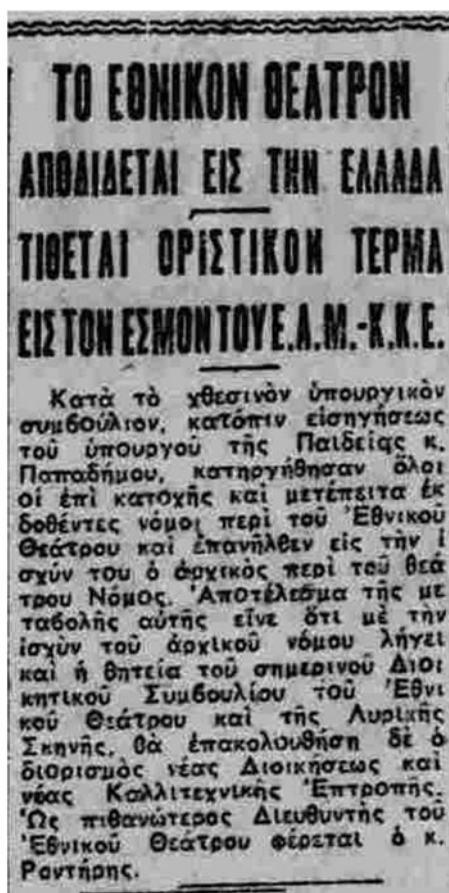


Fig. 2. 'The National Theatre returns to Greece'. *Ελληνικόν Αἷμα*, 30 April 1946.

function of art to party fanaticism; [...] Hence I believe that I am obliged to react [...] against a system which I regard as destructive to all intellectual activity.⁴²

In spite of its short duration, however, this 'collective intellectual endeavour' managed to introduce some innovative concepts into Athenian theatrical culture, including the 'Literary Evenings'. In the following sections I will show how the aims of this project exemplify the demand for popular culture that prevailed in the post-Liberation era, starting with a comparison between the 'Literary Evenings' and their immediate model, the 'Matinées poétiques' of the Comédie-Française.

The European model

When, in February 1945, Theotokas took up his duties, he promptly announced his intention to place the state theatre at the service of cultural diplomacy. He specifically

42 Board Meeting Minutes, 30 April 1946. Cf. G. Seferis, *Μέρες Ε' (1945- 1951)* (Athens 1977) 32-3.

argued that, under the present circumstances, the NT too was required to contribute to the strengthening of Greece's international image:

Nowadays, when Greece, with both its heroism and its suffering, has become one of the centres of international attention of this great War, the National Theatre, parallel to its distinct artistic and educational purpose, is required to contribute, with all the means at its disposal, to the elevation and maintenance of our national status among the United Nations.⁴³

This desire to raise the theatre's international profile was perhaps to be expected as both Theotokas, and other members of the Generation of the 1930s who joined him at that venture, shared a strong internationalist outlook that was already evident in their writings from the 1930s.⁴⁴ In 1942, Theotokas spoke of the possibility of a 'Federal Union of European Nations', while Kanellopoulos envisioned the post-war rise of a 'new Europe', founded upon a 'supranational political system'.⁴⁵ Motivated by these ideals, the NT administration attempted to elevate the Greek state theatre to the level of its European counterparts and, to this end, it imported several concepts which had already been tested abroad, such as the 'Alternating Repertoire System' and the 'Literary Evenings'.

The latter was directly modeled after the 'Matinées Poétiques', a series of poetry readings which occupied a permanent place in the repertoire of the Comédie-Française ever since its launch during the 1920–1 season. Theotokas personally suggested the transposition of this concept to the Greek NT, and the Board accepted his proposal.⁴⁶ It is worth noting that both Theotokas and Seferis were particularly familiar with the French 'Matinées' from the years they had spent in Paris back in the 1920s.⁴⁷ By the mid-1940s, the 'Matinées' was a long-running project, which showed all the characteristics of a well-grounded tradition, and yet its organizers decided it was time to redefine its mission and redesign its structure. Not coincidentally, this happened right after the Liberation.

More specifically, introducing the new cycle of 'Matinées', scheduled for the 1944–5 season, the Administrator-General of the Comédie, Pierre Dux, argued that the content of these productions would no longer resemble a haphazard mixture of poems chosen to match the skills of the actors/reciters, for it would now be arranged by a specialized committee, according to a broader plan ('un plan général'). By doing so, the organizers hoped to redirect audiences' attention from the famous performers to the performed texts, and ultimately present high-quality productions of a pronounced pedagogical

43 'Ανακοίνωσις προς το προσωπικόν του Ε.Θ.' (16 Feb. 1945), American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Gennadius Library Archives, George Theotokas Papers, Box 39, Folder 1; see also 'Πώς θα λειτουργήση το Εθνικό Θέατρο', *Η βραδυνή*, 3 Feb. 1945.

44 For Theotokas' vision of economic interdependence among nations, first expressed in his 1932 essay *Facing the Social Problem* [in Greek], see Hatzivassiliou, *Ελληνικός φιλελευθερισμός*, 54–5.

45 Quoted in Hatzivassiliou, *Ελληνικός φιλελευθερισμός*, 195–6.

46 See Board Meeting Minutes, 6 March 1945.

47 For Seferis' regular attendance at the 'Matinées Poétiques' of the early 1920s, see I. Tsatsou, *Ο αδελφός μου Γιώργος Σεφέρης* (Athens 1980) 122, 124–5, 139–40, and 149.

character.⁴⁸ Closing his brief note, Dux referred to the public as the ultimate judge of this experiment: ‘The public will tell us if it approves of us’.⁴⁹ In short, the changes in the structure of the ‘Matinées’ primarily intended to benefit the audience—the noun ‘public’ itself appearing four times in Dux’s one-page note.

Although it might be expected that a state theatre highlights its service to the people, it would be interesting to look at the way in which the aims of the ‘Matinées’ were summarized by Louis Payen, under whose management this project was launched. Introducing the publication *Anthologie des Matinées Poétiques de la Comédie Française*, Payen stated in 1927: ‘The poetry matinees have so nobly served the poets, revealed the great reciters (‘diseurs des vers’), and added the final jewel to the artistic crown of the Comédie-Française, which will be preserved and further embellished’.⁵⁰ Thus first came the poets, then the masterly reciters and, finally, the institution itself, whose prestige was augmented by this project. The lack of reference to the audience implies that the ‘Matinées’ were not originally conceived as an educational project, or, at least, that their organizers were not so concerned with stressing that aspect, as they were in 1945, when the French Ministry of Education was developing new strategies to ensure that ‘culture and people will finally be reconciled’.⁵¹

Popularization

In Greece, Theotokas employed a similar rhetoric when he claimed that the main objective of the ‘Literary Evenings’ was to make literature accessible to the masses. In his words:

The aim of the Literary Evenings is easily understandable. We want to assist in making the treasures of our literature the property of the wide popular masses; so that they cease to be confined to a few connoisseurs, and become, as far as it is possible nowadays, intellectual nourishment for the masses.⁵²

In the same article, eloquently titled ‘Literature to the people’, Theotokas further elaborated on the popularizing character of this project, pointing to the affordable ticket prices and the inclusion of explanatory comments that would facilitate audience understanding (‘a speaker [...] will explain in a few words the performed texts [...] and will highlight which parts deserve most attention’). Lastly, Theotokas called on other intellectuals for their assistance in advertising this project (‘We are making an effort to bring literature closer to the people, but people should be aware of it’).

48 P. Dux, ‘Les Matinées Poétiques de la Comédie-Française’, in *Les Matinées Poétiques de la Comédie-Française: Programme de la saison 1944–1945* (Paris [n.d.]).

49 Dux, ‘Les Matinées Poétiques de la Comédie-Française’.

50 L. Payen, ‘Avant-propos’ in *Anthologie des Matinées Poétiques de la Comédie Française. Tome second: 1921–1925* (Paris 1927) 2.

51 Quoted in B. Rigby, ‘The reconstruction of culture’, 147.

52 G. Theotokas, ‘Η λογοτεχνία προς το λαό’.

One of the first bodies that responded to Theotokas' call was the left-wing journal *Ελεύθερα Γράμματα*, which, in November 1945, note: 'We congratulate those who conceived this worthy initiative [...] because it will contribute to a broader understanding of our literature from our audience'.⁵³ This is admittedly strange, considering that the 'Literary Evenings' was a product of the official state, whereas the *Ελεύθερα Γράμματα* often voiced harsh criticism of the post-*Dekemvriana* state policies. Yet the philosophy of the 'Literary Evenings' was so astonishingly close to the theoretical proclamations of the Greek Left that this seems to have outweighed any reservations relating to the institutional profile of this project.

As far as educational policy is concerned, the position of the Left was clearly articulated in May 1944, at the first meeting of the Political Committee of National Liberation (PEEA) which was established in 1944 to administer the liberated areas controlled by EAM. The views expressed back then by PEEA's Secretary of Education were later reproduced in the pages of *Ελεύθερα Γράμματα*, under the heading 'Popular Education': 'In the emerging people's state, which is founded upon the heroic struggle of the Greek people, education should be the property of the people'.⁵⁴ As was seen above, the claim to make knowledge accessible to the public ('κτήμα του λαού') was also invoked by Theotokas as the aim of the 'Literary Evenings' ('κτήμα των πλατύτερων λαϊκών στρωμάτων'). This coincidence cannot be interpreted as evidence of EAM's influence on Theotokas, for equality of educational opportunity was high on the agenda of Greek radical liberals even before the war.⁵⁵ Accordingly, when, in November 1944, Papandreou announced his intended educational reforms, he affirmed that his programme aimed at 'elevating the intellectual level of the large masses'.⁵⁶

After the collapse of the Papandreou cabinet, the succeeding Plastiras government moved in the same direction in terms of its educational policy. As Minister of Education, Amantos prepared a draft bill for the establishment of local libraries throughout rural areas.⁵⁷ A few months later, the same issue would be taken up by the left-wing *Ελεύθερα Γράμματα*: 'Today, even in the smallest mountain villages, there is a true thirst for knowledge and learning'.⁵⁸ Having previously observed the developments at the NT, it comes as no surprise that Amantos' bill elicited mocking responses from the right-wing press.⁵⁹ These examples aptly illustrate that, despite

53 'Μια καλή ιδέα' [unsigned editorial note], *Ελεύθερα Γράμματα* 28–9 (1945) 2.

54 Quoted in R. Imvrioti, 'Η λαϊκή παιδεία', *Ελεύθερα Γράμματα* 22 (1945) 12.

55 See Hatzivassiliou, *Ελληνικός φιλελευθερισμός*, 194–5.

56 G. Theotokas, 'Εκπαιδευτική πολιτική', *Καθημερινά Νέα*, 21 Nov. 1944, reprinted in *Πολιτικά κείμενα*, 175–7.

57 See K. Amantos, 'Η Δημοτική γλώσσα και η Παιδεία', *Νέα Εστία* 435 (1945) 618.

58 'Βιβλία και βιβλιοθήκες για το λαό' [unsigned editorial note], *Ελεύθερα Γράμματα* 7 (1945) 2.

59 See 'Ζαφειρίτσας φερετζές', *Εστία*, 30 March 1945; yet Amantos was explicitly accused of being a communist when he attempted to legislate demotic as the official Greek language; see Amantos, 'Η Δημοτική γλώσσα και η Παιδεία'.

their profound ideological differences, both the centrist governments of the post-Liberation period and the Left argued for the democratization of education—a cause which made them a common target for the Right.

Alongside the demand for popular education, left-wing intellectuals similarly underlined the need to popularize literature and the performing arts; ‘people are thirsty for spectacles’, as the leftist author and playwright Giorgos Kotzioulas wrote in 1944.⁶⁰ However, the conviction that the war had brought about a change in the relationship between art and the public was at the time shared by numerous intellectuals, regardless of their ideological background. In 1945, for instance, Sikelianos declared, through an allusion to the ‘Ode to Joy’ from Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, that the end of the war signalled the beginning of an era in which the gap between artist and society was being bridged: ‘the Craftsman will be the first to announce [...] the beginning, the triumphal inner route, the genuine culmination of the long-awaited Universal Social Symphony: Joy! Joy!’.⁶¹ In the same vein, Elytis maintained that ‘his [intellectual’s] engagement to the state is now confirmed’.⁶² Elias Venezis sounded equally optimistic when arguing that, in 1946, theatre held unprecedented sway among popular audiences: ‘Now that, for the first time, the popular masses have moved to the front line of public life, this brings them closer to theatre, where they seek joy and emotion’.⁶³

Theatre’s growing popularity, observed from mid-1943 onwards,⁶⁴ was intertwined with the spreading of the resistance movement, and was heightened by the fact that theatrical performances offered a rare opportunity for collective gatherings in occupied Athens. The renewed social function of theatre might explain why many members of the Generation of the 1930s, who joined the NT in 1945, started their involvement with theatrical affairs during the war. Besides Theotokas, and his wartime turn towards dramatic form,⁶⁵ Gatsos too was preoccupied with translating Lorca’s *Blood Wedding*, which was published by the Ikaros publishing house in 1945.⁶⁶ As for Dimaras, he taught literature at the NT’s Drama School (1941–6),⁶⁷ while both

60 Diary entry, dated 10 July 1944; quoted in G. Kotzioulas, *Θέατρο στα βουνά* (Athens 1976) 44–5.

61 A. Sikelianos, ‘Η τέχνη και η εποχή’ [survey], *Νέα Εστία* 433 (1945) 510.

62 O. Elytis, ‘Πνεύμα και πολιτική’; also indicative of Elytis’ confidence in this newly forged relationship is his article’s subtitle: ‘The war opened up new intellectual horizons for popular masses towards a new, better era’.

63 E. Venezis, ‘Το θέατρο και η εποχή’ [survey], *Νέα Εστία* 450 (1946) 423.

64 See Koukourikou, ‘Ελληνικό θέατρο και ιστορία’, 33–4.

65 For Theotokas’ wartime production, which he later labelled as ‘popular theatre’ [*Θεατρικά έργα Α΄. Νεοελληνικό λαϊκό θέατρο* (Athens 1965)], see Petrakou, *Ο Θεοτοκάς του θεάτρου*, 45–223.

66 The play was originally meant to be staged at the NT in the 1945–6 season, together with other productions which were eventually left out of the repertoire, including Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* in a new translation by Seferis; see Board Meeting Minutes, 29 May 1945.

67 See L. Sapounaki-Drakaki and M. Tzogia-Moatsou, *Η Δραματική Σχολή του Εθνικού Θεάτρου* (Athens 2011) 490.

Theotokas and Elytis gave seminars at the private drama school of Giannoulis Sarandidis,⁶⁸ which operated from 1940 to 1944.⁶⁹

Meanwhile, EAM also placed considerable weight on organizing and financially supporting various theatrical enterprises. Apart from the itinerant troupes performing in the mountains of rural Greece,⁷⁰ EAM was also involved in the operation of the Athenian 'People's Theatre' (November–December 1944),⁷¹ and its successor, the 'United Artists' (June 1945–October 1946). In line with EAM's educational policy, these troupes programmatically aimed at popularizing the art of theatre; the mission of the 'United Artists', for instance, was clearly outlined in the organization's Statute:

(a) to reach large popular masses, (b) to offer intellectual nourishment on the basis of true art, (c) that the essence of this art should conform to the local and international reality.⁷²

The role of theatre as 'intellectual nourishment' echoes Theotokas' statements quoted at the outset, where this metaphor was used to describe the 'Literary Evenings'. Yet, even though the NT and the 'United Artists' built on the same rhetorical ground, an essential difference lies in the means by which they sought to achieve their popularizing purposes. As will be shown, whereas the 'United Artists' presented a type of spectacle imbued with allusions to 'local and international reality', the NT chose to reintroduce the literary past or, to quote Theotokas, 'the treasures of our literature'.

Canonization

The 'Literary Evenings' of the season 1945–6 consisted of four performances (numbered A' to Δ'), which were all restaged for at least a second evening.⁷³ The literary texts were recited by students of the NT Drama School, whereas the intervening introductory notes

68 See D. Dimopoulos, *Ένας σκηνοθέτης θυμάται...* (Athens 1998) 60; for Seferis' visits to Sarandidis' drama school in September 1940, see G. Seferis, *Μέρες Γ'* (1934–1940) (Athens 1977) 235–6.

69 The launch of (mostly short-lived) drama schools in Athens during the war, such as the schools of Sarandidis, Marika Kotopoulou, Vasilis Rotas and, of course, Karolos Koun, is a phenomenon that surely deserves further scrutiny, especially when viewed in the light of theatre's importance to the national war effort and the resistance movement.

70 On EAM's 'theatre in the mountains' see, for instance, L. Myrsiades and K. Myrsiades, *Cultural Representation in Historical Resistance: Complexity and Construction in Greek Guerrilla Theater* (Cranbury, NJ 1999); A. Vogiatzoglou, *Ποίηση και πολεμική. Μια βιογραφία του Γιώργου Κοτζιούλα* (Athens 2015) 161–91.

71 On the 'People's Theatre' ('Θέατρο του Λαού') as the first politically engaged theatre group ever founded in Greece see Stamatopoulou, *Το νεοελληνικό θέατρο στα χρόνια της καθεκτικής δημοκρατίας*, 91–3.

72 Stored in the archive of the actress/member of the 'United Artists' troupe, Aspasia Papathanasiou; quoted in Koukourikou, 'Ελληνικό θέατρο και ιστορία', 150.

73 Only the first Evening was given three times (23 Nov. 1945, 30 Nov. 1945, 2 Feb. 1946); the second, third and fourth Evenings were staged twice (14 Jan. 1946/21 Jan. 1946, 11 Mar. 1946/18 Mar. 1946 and 29 Apr. 1946/5 May 1946, respectively).

were read by senior members of the NT troupe. According to the printed programme of the first Literary Evening:

The programmes are arranged by the Directorate-General in cooperation with Mr K. Th. Dimaras, professor at the [National Theatre] Drama School, and authors, Mr Odysseus Elytis and Mr Nikos Gatsos. The artistic supervision of the Literary Evenings has been assigned to the director, Mr Sokratis Karandinos. Responsible for the [mode of] recitation of the poems included in the first Literary Evening is Mrs Elli Grigoriadi, professor at the [National Theatre] Drama School.

Not all of the above contributors receive mention in the programmes of the next Literary Evenings; only Karandinos and Grigoriadi are credited in the programme of the second Evening, while the two remaining programmes mention (besides Karandinos and Grigoriadi) that ‘the introductory notes are drawn up by the Directorate-General and Mr K. Th. Dimaras, professor at the Drama School’.⁷⁴ One can only speculate either that Elytis and Gatsos dropped out of this project after its premiere, or that their names were merely effaced from the programmes as their involvement in the NT had attracted some negative attention, which will be discussed below.⁷⁵

In terms of overall design, the basic difference between the French ‘*Matinées Poétiques*’ and their Greek version is already evident in their respective titles: from ‘poetry’ to ‘literary’ evenings. This hints at the inclusion of prose in the ‘Literary Evenings’ which, in turn, reflects the organizers’ intention to offer a panoramic image of modern Greek literary tradition. As Theotokas put it, ‘all timbres of Greek literature will be heard, from the Akritic cycle to the present day’.⁷⁶ This broad chronological spectrum was not divided into four sequences/Evenings, but each Evening comprised exemplary texts drawn from all stages in the development of modern Greek literature (figs. 3, 4). In particular, each Evening was divided into two parts, of which the first opened with a folk song, followed by an excerpt from a Cretan Renaissance play, and poems representative of the School of the Ionian Islands and the Old Athenian School. The first part of each Evening closed with a prose text, dating from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As for the second part, it covered the poetic production of a much shorter period, stretching roughly from the 1880s to the 1920s.

Leaving aside folk poetry and three other anonymous texts,⁷⁷ the series presented the work of 36 individual authors. The following table lists these authors, according to the

74 Γ' Λογοτεχνική Απογευματινή and Δ' Λογοτεχνική Απογευματινή [printed programmes]; National Theatre of Greece, Archive, Press Clippings (1945–6).

75 Their contribution to the Literary Evenings, however, is acknowledged again in Theotokas’ informal report of his term of office, published in April 1946; G. Theotokas, ‘Η πρώτη μεταπολεμική περίοδος του Εθνικού Θεάτρου’, 468.

76 G. Theotokas, ‘Η λογοτεχνία προς το λαό’.

77 Two sonnets from the collection of religious poems *Ἀνθη ευλαβείας* (1708), included in the third Evening, and an excerpt from the pastoral idyll *Η Βοσκοπούλα* (ca. 1600), performed in the fourth Evening.

Π Ρ Ο Γ Ρ Α Μ Μ Α	
ΕΙΣΗΓΗΣΗ ΘΑΚΟΣ ΚΩΤΣΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ	ΛΑΜΠΡΟΥ ΠΟΡΦΥΡΑ
ΑΚΡΤΙΚΟΣ ΚΥΚΛΟΣ	Δέηση γιά τήν ψυχή τοῦ Παπαδιαμαντή Ζήνα Παπαδοπούλου
Ὁ θάνατος τοῦ Λιγνῆ ΧΑΡ. ΠΑΚΟΟΥΔΗΣ	Μὴν εὐλαῖς ΦΡΟΣ ΠΑΠΑΔΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ
ΓΕΩΡΓΙΟΥ ΧΟΡΤΑΤΖΗ	Ἑορτασμός ΑΛΚΗΣ ΠΑΠΠΑΣ
Ἑρωδιὴ (ἀπόσπασμα χορικοῦ γ' ποιήσε) ΕΛΕΝΗ ΝΕΝΕΔΑΚΗ	ΜΙΛΤΙΑΔΗ ΜΑΛΑΚΑΣΗ
ΔΙΟΝΥΣΙΟΥ ΣΟΛΩΜΟΥ	Ὁ Τάκη-Πλοῦμος ΗΛΙΑΣ ΣΤΑΜΑΤΙΟΥ
Ὕμνος εἰς τὴν Ἑλευθερίαν (ἀπόσπασμα) ΑΛΚΗΣ ΠΑΠΠΑΣ	Ὁ Μπαταριάς ΝΙΚΟΣ ΔΗΜΗΤΡΑΚΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ
ΑΝΔΡΕΟΥ ΚΑΛΒΟΥ	ΑΓΓΕΛΟΥ ΣΙΚΕΛΙΑΝΟΥ
Τὰ θφαίστεια (ἀπόσπασμα) ΗΛΙΑΣ ΣΤΑΜΑΤΙΟΥ	Ἰερὰ Ὀδὸς ΧΑΡ. ΠΑΚΟΟΥΔΗΣ
ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ ΚΑΡΑΣΟΥΤΣΑ	Σώλωνος ἀπώλογος ΘΑΛΕΙΑ ΚΑΛΑΓΑ
Γέρον ἀοιδὸς ψάλλον τὸ ἔαρ ΑΛΚΗΣ ΠΑΠΠΑΣ	
ΨΥΧΑΡΗ	
Δόξα καὶ μοναξιά (Τὸ ταξίδι μου) ΕΛΕΝΗ ΝΕΝΕΔΑΚΗ	
ΚΩΣΤΗ ΠΑΛΑΜΑ	
Ὅλες τὴς ἀγάπες ΛΕΩΝ ΠΕΛΤΑ	
Βάννα ΛΟΥΪΖΑ ΠΟΗΜΑΤΑ	
Μιά πλάκα ΦΡΟΣ ΠΑΠΑΔΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ	
Ἑκατὸ φρονὶς (διὰ τὸ ἀνέστηκα) ΛΟΥΪΖΑ ΠΟΗΜΑΤΑ	
Σὺν, μὴν τρέμεις ΗΛΙΑΣ ΣΤΑΜΑΤΙΟΥ	
	Ζήνα Παπαδοπούλου
	ΧΑΡ. ΠΑΚΟΟΥΔΗΣ
	ΕΛΕΝΗ ΝΕΝΕΔΑΚΗ

Fig. 3. Printed programme of the first 'Literary Evening', November 1945. © National Theatre of Greece.

Π Ρ Ο Γ Ρ Α Μ Μ Α	
ΕΙΣΗΓΗΣΗ Θάνος Κωτσόπουλος	ΚΩΣΤΑ ΚΡΥΣΤΑΛΛΗ
ΒΙΤΣΕΝΤΖΟΥ ΚΟΡΝΑΡΟΥ	Ἡ ποδοπλανταγμένη Μαρία Ἀλκαίου
Ἑρωτόκριτος (ὁ ἐπίλογος) Ἑλένη Νενεδάκη	ΚΩΣΤΗ ΠΑΛΑΜΑ
ΔΗΜΟΤΙΚΗ ΠΟΙΗΣΗ	Ὁ σάτυρος ἢ τὸ γυνὸ τραγοῦδι ΧΑΡ. ΠΑΚΟΟΥΔΗΣ
Ὁ Κύρ Βοριάς Ἀλκης Παππᾶς	Ι. Ν. ΓΡΥΠΑΡΗ
ΔΙΟΝΥΣΙΟΥ ΣΟΛΩΜΟΥ	Ἰντερμέδια (ἔξη ποιήματα) Ζήνα Παπαδοπούλου
Ἡ ξανθούλα Μαρία Ἀλκαίου	Φρὸσα Παπαδοπούλου
Ἡ ἀγνώριστη » » Ἡλίας Σταματίου	Ὁ Νυμφίος Ἑλένη Νενεδάκη
Πρὸς τὸν Κύριον Γεώργιον Δε Ρώσση » » Ἑλῖα Βεργή	Ἑορτασμός
Ὡδὴ εἰς τὴν σελήνην » »	Κ. Π. ΚΑΒΑΦΗ
Ἡ φαρμακωμένη Λέλα Ἡσαΐα	Οἱ Βάρβαροι Ἡλίας Σταματίου
ΗΛΙΑ ΤΑΝΤΑΛΙΔΗ	Ἀπολείπειν ὁ Θεὸς Ἀντώνιον Ἀλκης Παππᾶς
Ὕμνος τελευταῖος τῶν εἰς τὸν Μάϊον Ἑλένη Χαλκούση	ΓΕΩΡΓΙΟΥ ΑΘΑΝΑ
ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ ΠΑΠΑΔΙΑΜΑΝΤΗ	Παρασκευούλα Φρὸσα Παπαδοπούλου
Ὑπὸ τὴν βασιλικὴν δρῶν ΤΣ. ΚΑΡΟΥΣΟΣ (ἀνέγνωση) » »	Κεφαλόδρουσος » »
(Λιαλεῖμμα 10 λεπτῶν)	Οἱ ἀσάλευτες κυρίες τῶν ἐπαρχιῶν Νικ. Δημητράκοπούλος

Καλλιτεχνικὴ ἐπιτροπὴ: Σωκράτης Καραντινοῦ, ἀσκηθεὶς τοῦ Ἑθνικοῦ Θεάτρου
Ἐπιμέλεια ἀπαγγελίας: Ἑλληὴ Γρηγοριάδου, καθηγήτρια τῆς Δραματικῆς Σχολῆς

Fig. 4. Printed programme of the second 'Literary Evening', January 1946. © National Theatre of Greece.

number of performed texts corresponding to each, starting from the ones who enjoyed greater visibility in these events:

AUTHORS	TEXTS PERFORMED
Kostis Palamas (1859–1943)	8
Dionysios Solomos (1798–1857)	7
C. P. Cavafy (1863–1933)	5
Angelos Sikelianos (1884–1951)	4
Georgios Athanas (1893–1987) Georgios Drosinis (1859–1951) Ioannis Gryparis (1870–1942) Lorentzos Mavilis (1860–1912) Zacharias Papandoniou (1877–1940) Lambros Porfyas (1879–1932)	3
Konstantinos Chatzopoulos (1868–1920) Argyris Eftaliotis (1849–1923) Kostas Karyotakis (1896–1928) Miltiadis Malakasis (1869–1943) Alexandros Pallis (1851–1935) Sotiris Skipis (1881–1952) Georgios Vizyenos (1849–1896)	2
Georgios Chortatsis (1550–1660) Ion Dragoumis (1878–1920) Andreas Kalvos (1792–1869) Ioannis Karasoutsas (1824–1873) Nikos Kazantzakis (1883–1957) Adamantios Koraes (1748–1833) Vitsentzos Kornaros (1553–1613) Kostas Krystallis (1868–1894) Apostolos Melachrinis (1880–1952) Kostas Ouranis (1890–1953) Alexandros Papadiamantis (1851–1911) Dimitrios Paparrigopoulos (1843–1873) Yannis Psycharis (1854–1929) Alexandros R. Rangavis (1809–1892) Ilias Tantalidis (1818–1876) Aristotelis Valaoritis (1824–1879) Kostas Varnalis (1884–1974) Ioannis Vilaras (1771–1823) Petros Vlastos (1879–1941)	1

The largest group consists of authors represented by one text (nineteen authors), followed by those represented by two texts (seven authors), three texts (six authors), and more than three texts (four authors). However, the impression of a certain hierarchy is undermined when taking into account the varying length of the performed works. For, while the majority of these texts were poems of relatively short length, there were also many excerpts drawn from verse plays, prose texts or much longer poems.⁷⁸ Thus,

78 It is worth noting that only 8 out of the 85 selected poetic texts (9.41%) were sections extracted from longer poems; the latter were by Solomos, Kalvos, Valaoritis, Rangavis, Paparrigopoulos, Palamas and Kazantzakis.

although Mavilis, for instance, was represented by three sonnets and Kazantzakis by one passage from his epic poem *The Odyssey*, one can imagine that equal stage time was given to both. Such a balanced arrangement draws our attention to the prominence given to the poets who rank first (Palamas, Solomos, Cavafy and Sikelianos), whose work featured in more than one Evening.⁷⁹

Another notable feature of the above table is the complete absence of women authors; yet the dominance of male voices was mitigated during the actual events, where an almost equal number of texts were assigned to female and male performers (forty-seven and forty-five texts, respectively). Moreover, out of a total of thirty-six authors, only eight were alive at the time these events took place (22%). Most of them, however, were in their sixties, and thereby belonged to older literary generations. The absence of younger authors had obvious consequences for both the form and content of the performed texts. In terms of form, free-verse poetry was left out of this project altogether; even the youngest poet featuring in the series, Georgios Athanas, was stylistically tied to the past, using traditional metre throughout his work. In addition, since none of the anthologized works was written after 1940, the series was devoid of poems that thematized recent experiences of war and resistance. This put the 'Literary Evenings' into sharp contrast with a current trend in public poetry speaking, evident both inside and outside Greece, according to which contemporary poems with a powerful topical dimension were favoured as recitation pieces.

The 'Matinées poétiques' of the 1944–5 season, for instance, commenced with a performance devoted to the 'Poètes de la Résistance' (fig. 5).⁸⁰ In Greece, Kotzioulas' EAM-funded theatre troupe ('Popular Stage'), which continued its tours in the first months after the Liberation, regularly performed poems inspired by contemporary events, marked in the programme as 'occasional verses' ('επίκαιροι στίχοι') (fig. 6).⁸¹ More tellingly though, in 1946, EAM attempted to put forward its own canon through a recitation anthology titled *Small Anthology: Poems of Struggle for Recitation*.⁸² A comparison between the contents of this book and those of the 'Literary Evenings' shows that, while the NT was preoccupied with the literary past, EAM concentrated on the literary present. In particular, of the twenty-two authors included in the *Small Anthology*, only one (Palamas) was not alive at the time of its publication. Women poets were also represented, albeit to a limited extent (9%). The main thread that tied the anthologized poems together was their occasional character, evident already in their titles, which alluded to sites of massacres or executions by the

79 Solomos' and Palamas' poems were heard in three Evenings (A', B' and Γ'); both Cavafy and Sikelianos were anthologized in two Evenings (B'/Γ' and A'/Δ', respectively).

80 For the oral circulation of French resistance poetry during the 1940s, see Papanikolaou, *Singing Poets*, 16–18.

81 Some of these occasional poems were both written and performed before audiences by Kotzioulas himself; see Vogiatzoglou, *Ποίηση και πολέμική*, 179.

82 *Μικρή ανθολογία. Ποιήματα του αγώνα για απαγγελία* (Athens 1946). The volume appeared as a publication of EAM's local unit of the Athenian Koukaki district.

LES MATINÉES POÉTIQUES

DE LA COMÉDIE-FRANÇAISE

SAISON 1944-1945

●

1944

Octobre Poètes de la Résistance.
 Décembre Voltaire.
 La Poésie Anglaise.

1945

Janvier.. La Poésie Américaine.
 Mars La Poésie Russe.
 Paul Claudel.

Avril : Samedi 21 (Abonnement) }
 Samedi 28 (Hors Ab^{ment}) } Paul Valéry.

Mai : Samedi 12 (Abonnement) }
 Samedi 26 (Hors Ab^{ment}) } Jean Giraudoux.

Juin : Samedi 16 (Abonnement) }
 Samedi 23 (Hors Ab^{ment}) } Charles Péguy.

●

Fig. 5. Performance dates and contents of the 1944–5 ‘Matinées poétiques’ of the Comédie-Française. Published in *Les Matinées Poétiques de la Comédie-Française: Programme de la saison 1944–1945* (Paris [n.d.]).

Nazis (e.g. ‘The song of Distomo’, ‘Kaisariani’, ‘Kokkinia cries out’).⁸³ The emphasis on thematic over stylistic criteria explains why, next to well-known leftist authors such as Markos Avgeris or Nikiforos Vrettakos, we encounter amateur poets such as the actors Aimilios Veakis and Dinos Dimopoulos.

By contrast, the modernist writers behind the ‘Literary Evenings’ viewed the resurgence of occasional poetry with overt scepticism. Theotokas, for instance, clearly distinguished between ‘great popular art’ and works imbued with topical references:

Tomorrow’s society will most likely turn to a similar ideal of great popular art. I use the adjective ‘popular’ here in its broad and essentially intellectual sense, in the sense that the tragedies of Aeschylus or Shakespeare constituted ‘popular’ art [...] As for the works of sociopolitical topicality, preaching, polemic, and propaganda, [...] every well-informed individual knows that they are destined to quickly fall into oblivion.⁸⁴

Likewise, Gatsos noted that ‘our Albanian war and the Greek people’s struggle for resistance should not end up being themes — as they are about to — for ephemeral

83 See N. Vranas, ‘Το τραγούδι του Δίστομου’, K. Kalantzis, ‘Καισαριανή’, and K. Marinis, ‘Η Κокκινιά βροντολαλεί’ in *Μικρή ανθολογία*, 9, 13 and 14 respectively.

84 G. Theotokas, ‘Οι πνευματικοί μας άνθρωποι εμπρός στα μεταπολεμικά προβλήματα’ [survey], *Ελεύθερα Γράμματα* 15 (1945) 4.

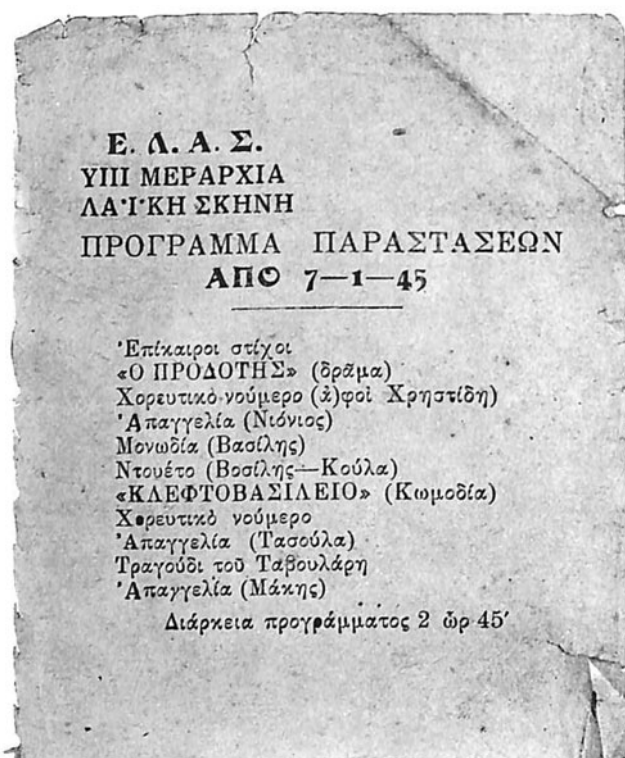


Fig. 6. Printed programme of the ELAS 'Popular Stage' touring troupe, January 1945. Reproduced in G. Kotzioulas, *Θέατρο στα βουνά* (Athens 1976) 48.

successes or political exploitation'. Instead, Gatsos pointed out that what Greek intellectuals have yet to accomplish is to introduce the national literary tradition to a wider public: 'It was the duty of our intellectuals to familiarize thirsty audiences with the most enduring values of our land; Kalvos, Solomos, Papadiamantis, Karkavitsas, Makriyannis, Dragoumis, Palamas, and so many others'.⁸⁵ The remainder of this section shows how the image of literary tradition created through the 'Literary Evenings' represents a new approach, one that embodies the conception of the canon put forward by the Generation of the 1930s.

Although the great variety of texts that marked the programmes of the 'Literary Evenings' may give the impression that this project conveyed a conventional image of the canon, it appears that this image did not match any of the versions of the canon already in place. The literature curriculum at school and university level offers a useful benchmark against which the contents of the 'Literary Evenings' can be contrasted. Unfortunately, the outbreak of the war suspended the publication of the University of Athens yearbook for most of the 1940s (1940–8); still, the pre-1940 issues provide an

85 N. Gatsos, 'Η κρίση της πνευματικής ζωής', *Καθημερινά Νέα*, 24 June 1945.

adequate picture of the courses in modern Greek literature taught by Nikos Veis, Professor of Medieval and Modern Greek Literature (1925–46), whereas the post-1948 yearbooks outline the courses designed by Georgios Zoras, holder of the second chair in this subject from 1942 to 1982. Thus the surviving yearbooks dating from 1930 to 1950 reveal that the literature curriculum hardly extended beyond the production of the Generation of the 1880s. The only references to twentieth-century literature appear as part of two courses on Greek prose writers, given by Veis in 1936–7 and 1937–8.⁸⁶ In October 1945, most faculty members voted against the conversion of the second chair in Medieval and Modern Greek into a chair devoted exclusively to Modern Greek, one of them arguing that ‘modern Greek literature has been scantily cultivated’.⁸⁷ Perhaps it was the limited scope of the university canon that urged Gatsos to make the rather exaggerated claim: ‘The School of Philosophy of the University [of Athens] does not even really acknowledge Solomos’.⁸⁸

Turning to the school textbooks of the same period (*Νεοελληνικά Αναγνώσματα*), published by the state-run Organization for the Publication of School Books (OESV), their broad chronological scope, which embraced the post-Palamas literary generation, brought them closer to the ‘Literary Evenings’. Yet two of the most visible authors in the NT productions, Cavafy and Sikelianos, were absent from the literature textbooks of the mid-1940s, and would enter the school canon as late as 1976.⁸⁹ Similarly, the only left-wing poet presented by the NT, Kostas Varnalis, was also excluded from school textbooks until 1976, a year in which the school canon opened up to include other authors whom we encountered in the ‘Literary Evenings’, such as Kazantzakis and Karyotakis.⁹⁰

A different take on the canon can be traced in the literary histories published before the war. The two most comprehensive endeavours of this kind were the histories written by Elias Voutieridis (1924–7 and 1933) and Aristos Kambanis (1925), which both covered the period up to the 1930s.⁹¹ Even though these publications agree, in terms of their scope, with the ‘Literary Evenings’, their adherence to the agenda of demoticism distances them from the canonical scheme proposed by the NT. Kambanis,

86 See ‘Μυθιστόρημα και διήγημα του ΙΘ και Κ αιώνος’, *Επετηρίς του Πανεπιστημιακού Έτους 1936–1937* (Athens 1937) 125; ‘Διηγηματογραφία του ΙΘ και Κ αιώνος (1850–1930)’, *Επετηρίς του Πανεπιστημιακού Έτους 1937–1938* (Athens 1938) 123.

87 See ‘Συνεδρία Φιλοσοφικής Σχολής’, 15 Oct. 1945; Historical Archive of the University of Athens.

88 N. Gatsos, ‘Η πνευματική προπαγάνδα στο εξωτερικό’. *Καθημερινά Νέα*, 22 July 1945.

89 Prior to 1976, Cavafy and Sikelianos were represented (by one poem each) in a textbook published in 1931, which fell out of use after the establishment of OESV in 1937; see Ch. Koumbarou-Chanioti, *Τα Νεοελληνικά Αναγνώσματα στη Μέση Εκπαίδευση. Συγγραφείς και ανθολογημένα κείμενα (1884–1977)* (Athens 2003) 78 and 152, respectively.

90 See Koumbarou-Chanioti, *Τα Νεοελληνικά Αναγνώσματα*, 47, 78 and 86, respectively.

91 See E. Voutieridis, *Ιστορία της νεοελληνικής λογοτεχνίας. Από των μέσων του ΙΕ΄ αιώνος μέχρι των νεώτατων χρόνων*, 2 vols (Athens 1924–7), and *Σύντομη ιστορία της νεοελληνικής λογοτεχνίας (1000–1930)* (Athens 1933); A. Kambanis, *Ιστορία της νέας ελληνικής λογοτεχνίας (1000 μ.Χ.-1900)* (Alexandria 1925), and *Ιστορία της νέας ελληνικής λογοτεχνίας (έως το 1932)* (Athens 1933).

in his preface, stated that 'the main subject of this work is demotic [literary] production', paying scant attention to works written in the purist (*katharevousa*) language.⁹² Voutieridis appeared to be less militant, claiming that he made no discrimination based on linguistic criteria.⁹³ This statement is undermined, however, by his negative stance towards poets who wrote in a more idiosyncratic language, such as Kalvos and Cavafy. Commenting on the latter, for instance, Voutieridis found his philosophy to be 'shallow and trivial', and went on to interpret his widespread fame as 'merely a trend, which will soon fade away'.⁹⁴

As Giorgos Kechagioglou notes, the first literary history to reinforce Cavafy's canonical status and overcome the 'demoticist syndrome' was Dimaras' *Ιστορία της νεοελληνικής λογοτεχνίας*, published two years after the project under review (1948–9).⁹⁵ This brings more attention to the role of Dimaras in arranging this project, which becomes particularly apparent in the way the NT presented poets who wrote in *katharevousa*; introducing Ioannis Karasoutsas, for instance, the NT underlined the poet's 'subtlety of emotions' and 'delicate appreciation of the natural world',⁹⁶ in a manner echoing the way the same poet was portrayed in Dimaras' *History*: 'The new element which he [Karasoutsas] introduces is a true sensitivity towards nature'.⁹⁷ The inclusion of *katharevousa* in the staged events extended the vocal palette of the series, generating audible contrasts between the performed works. In the first Evening, for instance, Karasoutsas' poem 'Ἐέρων αοιδός ψάλλων το ἔαρ' was delivered immediately before the manifesto of the demoticist movement, Psycharis' *Το ταξίδι μου*.

By combining *katharevousa* with demotic, prose with poetry, and oral with written literature, the 'Literary Evenings' proposed a version of the canon that defied generic, linguistic or stylistic oppositions. According to Theotokas, this new approach to the canon should be entirely attributed to his own generation; in reviewing the first volume of Dimaras' *History*, Theotokas regarded it as evidence that 'our generation has apparently reached intellectual maturity'.⁹⁸ Also, when, in 1947, Theotokas gave his first lecture on the Generation of the 1930s, he noted among its achievements:

[...] assimilation and appropriation of the modern Greek intellectual past in its entirety. Overcoming the old antitheses. Merging them into a broad modern Greek synthesis which harmonically combines: demotic tradition, Solomos

92 See Kambanis, *Ιστορία* (1925) 9; cf. V. Apostolidou, 'Δημοτικισμός και ιστορία της λογοτεχνίας: Αρίστος Καμπάνης', in *Ο Κωστής Παλαμάς ιστορικός της νεοελληνικής λογοτεχνίας* (Athens 1992) 360–4.

93 See Voutieridis, *Ιστορία*, II, 121–3.

94 Voutieridis, *Σύντομη ιστορία*, 387.

95 See G. Kechagioglou, 'Οι ιστορίες της νεοελληνικής λογοτεχνίας', *Μαντατοφόρος* 15 (1980) 18.

96 See 'Α' Λογοτεχνική Απογευματινή. Εισήγηση', ASCSA, Gennadius Library Archives, George Theotokas Papers, Box 39, Folder 1.

97 K. Th. Dimaras, *Ιστορία της νεοελληνικής λογοτεχνίας. Από τον ρομαντισμό ως την εποχή μας* (Athens 1949) 33.

98 G. Theotokas, 'Κ. Θ. Δημαρά: *Ιστορία της νεοελληνικής λογοτεχνίας. Τόμος α'*', *Νέα Εστία* 521 (1948) 382.

and Kalvos, Makriyannis, Psycharis and Papadiamantis, Palamas and Cavafy. Hence: a synthesis of modern Greek intellectual traditions which, till yesterday, seemed incompatible.⁹⁹

The concept of a ‘broad modern Greek synthesis’ was already implied in Theotokas’ landmark essay *Free Spirit* (1929), where he argued that the essence of the modern Greek character would be best captured by ‘a cluster of contradictions: Korais-Solomos-Psycharis-Palamas-Drakoulis’. To these names he then added Cavafy,¹⁰⁰ but rushed to clarify that ‘this catalogue should by no means be restrictive’ but ‘open to the unexpected possibilities the future holds’.¹⁰¹ Seferis, in his influential essay ‘Dialogue on poetry’ (1938), leaned towards an equally ‘open’ approach to the canon; denying the validity of stable aesthetic principles, Seferis argued in favour of the ‘constant renewal’ of art, as ‘every work of art that comes to be added to the series [of great works of art] affirms and at the same time modifies the meaning of the older masterpieces’.¹⁰² The question that arises at this point is whether, in their plea for an open-minded approach to literary tradition, the members of the Generation of the 1930s intended to create a canon flexible enough to later accommodate their own modernist output.

In this respect, the period examined here has a twofold significance for our understanding of the relationship of the Generation of the 1930s to the literary canon. For this period not only saw core members of this literary group publicizing their readings of the canon,¹⁰³ but also witnessed a series of attempts to present this generation as the newest addition to the canon. For instance, while the modernist writers engaged with the NT popularized Cavafy and Sikelianos through the ‘Literary Evenings’, Andreas Karandonis, in the pages of the *Anglo-Greek Review*, portrayed the same modernists as ‘the Palamas, Cavafy and Sikelianos of our times’.¹⁰⁴ This article gave rise to the earliest attacks against the Generation of the 1930s and its networking strategies; the theatre and literary critic Michael Rodas, a former member of the NT’s Artistic Committee, wrote an article entitled ‘A new kind of...

99 ‘The literary generation of the 1930s’ (outline of Theotokas’ lecture given on 22 November 1947), reprinted in Tziouvas, *Ο μύθος της γενιάς του τριάντα*, 566.

100 G. Theotokas, *Ελεύθερο πνεύμα* (Athens 1929) 28; for Theotokas’ contribution to the canonization of Cavafy, see V. Apostolidou, ‘Ο Θεοτοκάς και η λογοτεχνική παράδοση’, *Νέα Εστία* 1784 (2005) 987–8.

101 Theotokas, *Ελεύθερο πνεύμα*, 29.

102 G. Seferis, *On the Greek Style*, trans. R. Warner and Th. D. Frangopoulos (London 1967) 81.

103 In addition to the ‘Literary Evenings’, consider a series of ten lectures held at the Parnassos Literary Association (1946), five of which were delivered by intellectuals associated with the NT (Theotokas, Dimaras, Seferis, Elytis and Karandinos), presenting topics such as Greek Romanticism, *Erotokritos*, and the Memoirs of General Makriyannis.

104 A. Karandonis, ‘Η σύγχρονη ελληνική ποίηση’, *Αγγλοελληνική Επιθεώρηση* 1.9 (Nov. 1945) 9; the poets presented in this article were Seferis, Elytis, Embiricos, Engonopoulos, Andoniou, Sarandaris, Drivas, and Gatsos.

“intellectual collaborators”. The “heirs” of Solomos’, which appeared on the front page of the widely circulated daily *Ta Néa*.¹⁰⁵ Using the heavily charged term ‘collaborator’,¹⁰⁶ Rodas targeted Seferis, Gatsos, Embiricos and Engonopoulos, pointing both to their strong presence in the public sphere (‘they penetrate into esteemed intellectual and artistic institutions’), and their representation as legitimate successors of canonical poets (‘[they] will be “incorporated” into the modern Greek poetic tradition!’). Speaking of Gatsos, Rodas referred to him as a co-organizer of the ‘despicable Literary Evenings’, ironically suggesting that his poems might as well be presented at the NT.

Despite a tone of bitterness stemming from Rodas’ recent departure from the NT,¹⁰⁷ there may be an element of truth in the allegation that the ‘Literary Evenings’ implicitly paved the way for the canonization of modernist works. The appearance of prose texts in these events supports this hypothesis, given that a common complaint about modernist verse was that it blurred the boundaries between poetry and prose. The ‘Literary Evenings’ too undermined rigid distinctions between these genres, not simply by juxtaposing them, but also by smoothing out their differences at an auditory level. This brings us to another aspect of this project which further validates its modernist profile: the mode of oral delivery. This aspect was briefly touched upon by Theotokas, who argued that it was the NT’s responsibility to establish a normative manner of reading poetry aloud:

The National Theatre should thus be the place [...] where Greek verses are performed in an exemplary way. [...] The main tendency will be towards simplicity. The old-fashioned pomposity will be abandoned.¹⁰⁸

Rendered in a ‘simpler’ manner, metrical verses lost something of their sing-song effects, thereby assuming more prosaic overtones. At the same time, this kind of vocal rendering was diametrically at odds with the ‘musical’ approach to recitation cultivated by the NT’s former (and succeeding) director, Rondiris.¹⁰⁹ Themistoklis Athanasiadis-Novas, an eyewitness to the ‘Literary Evenings’, objected to the actors’ performance style, arguing that it aurally equated traditional and modernist poetry. As he remarked in 1949:

If we are to exchange heated pomposity for the coldness of prosaicness, then it is a thousand times better to stick to the pomposity. [...] Modernist poetry is cold,

105 M. Rodas, “Ένα νέο είδος...“πνευματικών δοσιλόγων”. Οι “κληρονόμοι” του Σολωμού”, *Ta Néa*, 6 Dec. 1945.

106 The use of the term provoked the reaction of Theotokas (‘Περίεργα ήθη’, *Καθημερινά Νέα*, 27 Jan. 1946), urging Rodas to reply that he simply made an ‘innocent pun’ (‘Η ελευθερία του πνευματικού ελέγχου’, *Ta Néa*, 30 Jan. 1946).

107 For Rodas’ resignation, due to his disagreement over which director should undertake the staging of Greek tragedies, see his memo to Theotokas, dated 23 April 1945; ASCSA, Gennadius Library Archives, George Theotokas Papers, Box 39, Folder 1.

108 Theotokas, ‘Η λογοτεχνία προς το λαό’.

109 See A. Glytzouris, *Η σκηνοθετική τέχνη στην Ελλάδα. Η ανάπτυξη και η εδραίωση της τέχνης του σκηνοθέτη στο νεοελληνικό θέατρο* (Heraklion 2011) 386–7.

and so is its recitation. But what about the old poetry of the heart? I've heard an artist reciting in a 'conversational' manner 'Mesolongitiko' by Malakasis, a poet whose verses should not be recited but almost sung!¹¹⁰

Thus, far more than the individual texts performed, it was the idea of synthesis underpinning this project, as well as the style of oral delivery, that reflected the modernist aesthetic of its organizers.

As the new director-general of the NT, Rondiris recommended that the 'Literary Evenings' be discontinued, despite their low production costs and the considerable audience numbers they were beginning to attract. Unfortunately, the NT's Archive records the total revenue from ticket sales but not the number of tickets sold. The latter can be estimated only with regard to the first Evening, for which we know the exact price per ticket.¹¹¹ Thus the opening Evening, as well as its restaging, gathered an audience of approximately 500 each, which is a low turnout by the standards of the NT, but a rather satisfactory one, if we take into account the specialized nature of this project as well as the severe crisis faced by all Athenian theatres.¹¹² This project would enjoy impressive commercial success in its subsequent form, the 'Poetry Evenings', launched during Theotokas' second tenure of the same position (1950–2), and permanently discontinued after his final departure. However, as the change in the project's title already implies, the 'Poetry Evenings' of the early 1950s lacked the broadened scope of their predecessor, each Evening being devoted to a specific poet or school of poets, with no ambition to introduce an alternative approach to the literary canon.¹¹³

Conclusion

Using the 'Literary Evenings' as a paradigm, I have tried to show that, despite the possibility of civil war lurking in the background, Greek cultural life of the years 1945–6 was marked by the same 'oddly optimistic mood' that, according to Tony Judt, transpired across Europe in the aftermath of Liberation.¹¹⁴ The European origins

110 Th. Athanasiadis-Novas, 'Ποίηση και απαγγελία', *Ελληνική Δημιουργία* 34 (1949) 36; for a positive assessment of the NT's performance techniques, see A. Thyrylos, 'Α' Λογοτεχνική Απογευματινή', *Νέα Εστία* 443 (1945) 1109.

111 Initially, ticket prices were 100 drachmas (full) and 50 (reduced). In 1946, due to inflation, ticket prices—for the other NT productions—soared to 1,200 drachmas (Board Meeting Minutes, 3 Jan. 1946); ticket prices for the 'Literary Evenings' increased as well, but, given Theotokas' intention to keep tickets affordable, we cannot determine the extent.

112 For the several causes of the theatrical crisis of the early post-war period, see G. Ioannidis, *Ξένοι συγγραφείς στο ελληνικό θέατρο (1945–1967). Από τη μεριά των θιάσων* (Athens 2014) 27–40.

113 For instance, the most successful Evening of this second cycle was the one dedicated to the School of the Ionian Islands, which was given four times (January–February 1952), attracting a total audience of 2,872; see National Theatre of Greece, Archive, Press Clippings (1951–2).

114 T. Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (London 2007) 64.

of the 'Literary Evenings', alongside the general international orientation of the NT, reflect the hopes for a new era in international relations exemplified by such bodies as the United Nations. The popularizing nature of this project embodies the post-war quest for the democratization of culture, while the medium of performance itself points to the renewed significance of the spoken word as a means to reach, guide and enlighten popular audiences.

As a mechanism of canonization, the 'Literary Evenings' capture the desire to rewrite literary history after the end of the war, and may be retrospectively identified as heralding iconic canonizing projects, like Dimaras' 1948 *History of Modern Greek Literature*. Though certainly not exhaustive, the content analysis of the 'Literary Evenings' has revealed that the programmes exemplified the broadened approach to the literary canon endorsed by its modernist organizers. On the whole, the appearance of leading exponents of the Generation of the 1930s, such as Theotokas, Seferis, Elytis, and Gatsos, as popularizers, canonizers, but also alleged communists, paints a profoundly different picture of this generation than that of a bourgeois literary group, aloof from the popular aspirations of its time. The 'Literary Evenings' thus open up an important and hitherto unexplored chapter in the history of Greek modernism, inviting further investigation into post-war modernist practices.

Lives in exile: foreign political refugees in early independent Greece (1830–53)¹

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This article discusses the stay in Greece of Italian and Polish political refugees of the 1830–1 and 1848–9 European revolutions. The article depicts the human geography of the refugees and examines the experience of exile both collectively and individually. Apart from studying the émigré communities as a whole in Athens, Patras and Syros, this paper also analyses the problems and expectations of specific refugees in Greece after 1849 (e.g. Antonio Morandi, Marco Antonio Canini, Oronzio Spinazzolla). This contribution thus adds to our understanding of both Greece under King Otto and the Mediterranean by highlighting aspects of transnational mobility and interaction of peoples and ideas in the mid-nineteenth century.

Keywords: revolutions of 1830–1 and 1848–9; Modern Greece; Italian and Polish political refugees

Introduction

Scholarly literature on nineteenth-century revolutionary movements in the 1820s, 1830–1, and 1848–9 has recently experienced a promising boost.² This renewed interest extends far beyond the frequently addressed national case studies of France, Germany, or Great Britain: areas such as Southern Europe, until recently neglected, are now becoming

1 I would like to thank Panagiotis Delis, Basil Gounaris, Kostas Kostis, Maria Christina Chatzioannou, Evanthis Hatzivassileiou, Miltos Pechlivanos and Jacek Knopek for the constructive discussions and feedback on earlier versions of this paper. Researching and writing were funded by the Alexander Onassis Foundation, the A. G. Leventis Foundation, the Foundation for Education and European Culture, the DAAD, and the Richard Plaschka Grant of the Austrian Exchange Service (OeAD).

2 M. Isabella, *Risorgimento in Exile: Italian Émigrés and the Liberal International in the Post-Napoleonic Era* (Oxford 2009); P. Pizani (ed.), *Η ελληνική επανάσταση του 1821: Ένα ευρωπαϊκό γεγονός* (Athens 2009); R. Stites, *The Four Horsemen. Riding to Liberty in Post-Napoleonic Europe* (Oxford 2014); G. Stedman Jones and D. Moggach (eds), *The 1848 Revolutions and European Political Thought* (Cambridge 2018). See also the forthcoming monographs by Maurizio Isabella about the southern European revolutions of the 1820s, and by Yannis Kotsonis on the Greek revolution of 1821.

centres of attention. Historians have begun to examine the Mediterranean Sea in particular not as a peripheral space but as a zone of mobility and fervent interaction of people and ideas that were not limited within this basin but influenced political discourses beyond the Mediterranean, in places such as Russia and South America.³ Narrating this entangled and connected history of the nineteenth-century Mediterranean world would be impossible without using a transnational framework that can help explain both national developments per se and their mutual interconnections.⁴ Such topics as variations in nationalism in ethnically mixed areas,⁵ intelligence and the role of consuls,⁶ political exiles, both high- and low-profile,⁷ and (in reaction to this phenomenon) transnational policing and conservatism⁸ now enjoy much closer attention in the Mediterranean context than ever before.

This article aims to contribute to these Mediterranean discussions by analysing a more specific topic, i.e., the arrival in Greece of Italian and Polish political refugees of the 1830–1 and 1848–9 revolutions. While pertinent studies have focused more on the attitude of the Greek state and society to the newcomers during and immediately after their arrival,⁹ this article aims to supplement and advance our knowledge on the matter in a slightly different way. I follow recent scholarship that not only sees the mid-nineteenth century as the age of great émigrés (e.g., Giuseppe Mazzini, Karl Marx, Lajos Kossuth) but also seeks to uncover the lives of the thousands of lesser

3 A. Liakos, *Η ιταλική ενοποίηση και η μεγάλη ιδέα, 1859–1862* (Athens 1985); I. Khuri-Makdisi, *The Eastern Mediterranean and the Making of Global Radicalism, 1860–1914* (Berkeley 2013); A. G. Noto, *La ricezione del Risorgimento greco in Italia (1770–1844)* (Rome 2015); A. Karakatsouli, *Μαχητές της Ελευθερίας: Η ελληνική επανάσταση στη διεθνική της διάσταση* (Athens 2016); K. Zanou and M. Isabella (eds), *Mediterranean Diasporas: Politics and Ideas in the Long Nineteenth Century* (London 2016); K. Zanou, *Transnational Patriotism in the Mediterranean, 1800–1850: Stammering the Nation* (Oxford 2018); J. Innes and M. Philp (eds), *Re-Imagining Democracy in the Mediterranean, 1780–1860* (Oxford 2018); J. Tucker (ed.), *The Making of the Modern Mediterranean: Views from the South* (Berkeley 2019).

4 On this opinion, M. Isabella, 'Exile and nationalism: the case of the Risorgimento', *European History Quarterly* 36/4 (2006) 493–520.

5 D. Reill, *Nationalists who Feared the Nation: Adriatic Multi-Nationalism in Habsburg Dalmatia, Trieste, and Venice* (Stanford 2012).

6 M. Suonpää and O. Wright (eds), *Diplomacy and Intelligence in the Nineteenth-Century Mediterranean World* (London 2019).

7 H. Toth, *An Exiled Generation: German and Hungarian Refugees of Revolution 1848–1871* (Cambridge 2014).

8 S. Sarlin, *Le légitimisme en armes: histoire d'une mobilisation internationale contre l'unité italienne* (Rome 2013); L. Di Fiore, *Gli Invisibili: Polizia politica e agenti segreti nell'Ottocento borbonico* (Naples 2018).

9 Above all C. Aliprantis, 'Political refugees of the 1848–49 revolutions in the Kingdom of Greece', *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 37/1 (2019) 1–33. Also S. Birtachas, 'Solidarietà e scambi ideologico-culturali italo-ellenici in epoca risorgimentale: L'emigrazione politica italiana nelle Isole Ionie e in Grecia', *Mediterranea. Ricerche storiche* 26 (2012) 461–74.

known exiles, who, after all, formed the bulk of émigré communities.¹⁰ Accordingly, I intend to explore the human geography of the refugee groups in Greece. Furthermore, I shall focus more specifically on certain foreign fugitives and analyse their views on the country, on aims, and on agency during their stay in Greece. That way, I can shed light on certain aspects of the much wider, transnational social history of political emigration in Europe and help integrate Greece into the history of nineteenth-century European revolutions and their aftermath. The attitude of the Greek authorities vis-à-vis the refugees will be discussed too particularly to the extent it offers a deeper insight into the activities and problems of the foreign fugitives themselves.

The above aims will be achieved through a combination of archival and published primary and secondary sources. First, I take advantage of Greek archival materials from both central (foreign and interior ministries) and municipal authorities (prefecture of the Cyclades). Second, I also use a number of Austrian, British, Italian, and Belgian archival sources, since they contain police and consular reports and émigré correspondence, which can provide valuable information about the exiles' profiles and whereabouts that cannot be found in the Greek archives. Third, although the exiles generally left only a small number of self-produced sources, I will exploit the available published primary sources, such as the memoirs and diaries of Polish and Italian émigrés, to achieve a deeper insight into their experience in Greece. The above sources will be occasionally supplemented by Greek newspapers, memoirs, diaries, and secondary literature, allowing for a better contextualization of the refugee question.

Finally, as far as the structure of the article is concerned, I shall first explore the origins of political migration in early independent Greece by looking at the Italian, Polish, and French exiles of the 1830–1 revolutions. Then I move on to the arrival of the Italian and Polish refugees of 1848–9 in Greece. In the last section, I discuss the stories of specific 'forty-eighters' and their relations with the Greek authorities. In this way I aim to depict different generations of exiles (1830, 1848) as well as the expectations and problems of the more numerous of them after 1848, both collectively and individually, in order to achieve a well-rounded analysis of the refugee experience in Greece.

Political exiles of the 1830–1 revolutions in Greece

After the outbreak of the Greek revolution in the Peloponnese in 1821, considerable numbers of foreign Philhellenes travelled to join the Greek cause.¹¹ Be they romantic

10 C. Lattek, *Revolutionary Refugees: German Socialism in Britain, 1840–1860* (London 2004); H. Toth, 'The historians' scales: families in exile in the aftermath of the revolutions of 1848', *Hungarian Historical Review* 1/3.4 (2012) 294–315. Sarah Panter's research project 'Rooted cosmopolitans and transatlantic mobilities: revolutionary lives after 1848/49' at the Leibniz Institute of European History is also relevant.

11 W. St Clair, *That Greece Might Still Be Free: The Philhellenes in the War of Independence* (Oxford 1972); A. Mandylara and L. Flitouris (eds), *Φιλελληνισμός: Το ενδιαφέρον για την Ελλάδα και τους Έλληνες από το 1821 ως σήμερα* (Athens 2015).

fighters like Byron or outright adventurers, most were either Germans, Italians (after the suppression of their own uprisings in 1820–1), or Poles (who sought to escape Tsarist oppression).¹² Despite the downswing in philhellenic arrivals after the collapse of the philhellenic military corps following the Greek defeat at the battle of Peta in 1822, other foreign groups would periodically follow in their footsteps during European political crises and revolutions later in the century.

By the time the Greek war of independence had come to an end, a series of revolutions in 1830–1 in France, the Papal States, and Poland created new waves of political émigrés, some of whom sought asylum in the Ionian Islands and Greece.¹³ The British authorities in Corfu allowed seventy-seven defeated Roman revolutionaries, predominantly of middle-class descent, to settle there. These included Francesco Orioli, later director of the Ionian Academy; Severiano Fogacci, the editor of the literary journals *Ape*, *Florilegio*, and *Album Ionio*; the officers Emilio and Attilio Bandiera; and the legal scholars Gerolamo Santorio, Salvatore Maria Guerra Rachetti, and Gian Francesco Lanzilli. Geographical proximity, religious tolerance, the Ionian Italophone culture, and preexisting relations with Ionian students in Italy, such as Geronimo Typaldos Pretenteris, formed a friendly environment for these fugitives.¹⁴ Even in exile, though, they did not abstain from political activity. The Bandiera brothers used Corfu as their base for planning an ill-organized revolt in Calabria in 1844, which was promptly suppressed and its protagonists executed.¹⁵ At the same time, in nearby Greece, where clandestine organizations such as the Philorthodox Society also plotted to expand the Greek borders,¹⁶ the Italian revolutionaries attempted to also win followers for the Risorgimento. The years between 1830 and 1848 mark the rise of Giuseppe Mazzini and his ‘Young Italy’ and ‘Young Europe’ initiatives to spread liberal ideas across the Continent.¹⁷ His Modenese emissary

12 Karakatsouli, *Μαχητές της Ελευθερίας*, passim; Birtachas, ‘L’emigrazione politica italiana’, 462–3; T. Sinko, ‘Udział Polaków w bojach i pracach Hellady’, *Przegląd Współczesny* 42 (1932) 277–300; J. Strasburger, ‘Le philhellénisme en Pologne aux années de l’insurrection Grecque 1821–1828’, *Balkan Studies* 12 (1971) 103–16; S. Loukatos (ed.), *Ο ιταλικός φιλελληνισμός κατά τον αγώνα της ελληνικής ανεξαρτησίας, 1821–1833* (Athens 1996); N. Klein, ‘L’humanité, le christianisme, et la liberté’: *Die internationale philhellenische Bewegung der 1820er Jahre* (Mainz 2000).

13 C. Church, *Europe in 1830: Revolution and Political Change* (London 1983); S. Aprile, J. C. Caron and E. Fureix (eds), *La liberté guidant les peuples: Les révolutions de 1830 en Europe* (Seysssel 2013).

14 Birtachas, ‘L’emigrazione politica italiana’, 464–6; M. C. Chatziioannou, ‘Οι Ιταλοί πρόσφυγες στα Ιόνια νησιά: Διαμορφωμένες πραγματικότητες και προοπτικές ενσωμάτωσης’, in *Πρακτικά Στ’ Διεθνούς Πανιόνιου Συνεδρίου* (Athens 2001) 495–510, esp. 497–9; A. Liakos, ‘Η διάθλαση των επαναστατικών ιδεών στον ελληνικό χώρο, 1830–1850’, *Τα Ιστορικά* 1 (1983) 121–44.

15 S. Meluso, *La spedizione in Calabria dei Fratelli Bandiera* (Soveria Mannelli 2001).

16 The Philorthodox Society was of course conservatively oriented. L. Frary, *Russia and the Making of Modern Greek Identity, 1821–1844* (Oxford 2015) ch. 6.

17 F. Della Peruta, *Mazzini e i rivoluzionari italiani. Il ‘partito d’azione’, 1830–45* (Milan 1974); C. A. Bayly and E. Biagini (eds), *Giuseppe Mazzini and the Globalization of Democratic Nationalism, 1830–1920* (Oxford 2008).

Emilio Usiglio tried to reach Greece in 1835 and again in 1837 to recruit allies, since Mazzini believed Greek irredentists would be receptive to his message. His hopes soon evaporated, though. Following a note from the Austrian embassy in Athens, King Otto ordered Usiglio's arrest and deportation before the latter managed to establish serious contacts in the country.¹⁸

Along with these Italian exiles, the November uprising in Congress Poland (1830–1) triggered the so-called 'Great Emigration' (Wielka Emigracja)¹⁹ of Polish revolutionaries, which continued after 1846, 1848, and 1863–64 (despite appearances, the exiles never numbered more than 8,000). While the great majority of the fleeing rebels ended up in Paris, where the July monarchy offered them asylum, a few arrived in Greece as well.²⁰ Polish interest in Greece can be traced back at least to the Napoleonic era, after the successive partitions of Poland.²¹ The head of the Napoleonic Polish Legion and pro-independence agitator, Jan Henryk Dąbrowski, suggested the settlement of 12,000 Polish legionaries in the then French-occupied Ionian islands, as well as on the nearby Epirus mainland, as a means to expand French influence in the Balkans.²² Although these plans failed to materialize, similar suggestions appeared after 1830. In spring 1831, the commander of the French troops in the Morea Antoine Virgile Schneider, proposed the establishment of a French-Polish colony in the Peloponnese staffed by the newly arrived exiles, who could thus remain in the region, replacing the French expeditionary forces (1828–31) and strengthening French influence. Schneider hoped, in particular, that the permanent presence of anti-Tsarist Polish settlers in Greece would undermine Russian influence in the country.²³ This plan too failed to work out as anticipated. The Poles aspired to be absorbed into the Greek army and civil service, but they soon encountered the poverty and meagre employment prospects of the early Greek state, as well as the unwillingness of the local Greek notables to allow Polish

18 Γενικά Αρχεία του Κράτους (ΓΑΚ), Ανακτορικά Όθωνα (ΑνΟ), file 404: Αστυνομία Ξένων, Athens, 26 June/2 July 1835; T. Nider-Kouvara, 'Το ταξίδι του Emilio Usiglio στην Ελλάδα και το μήνυμά της "Ευρώπης των Λαών"', in *Η Επανάσταση του 1821: Μελέτες στη μνήμη της Δέσποινας Θέμελη-Κατηφόρη* (Athens 1994) 173–201.

19 J. Zdrada, *Wielka Emigracja po Powstaniu Listopadowym* (Warsaw 1987); S. Kalemka, *Wielka Emigracja 1831–1863* (Toruń 2003).

20 L. Kramer, *Threshold of a New World: Intellectuals and the Exile Experience in Paris, 1830–1848* (Ithaca 1988); M. Iwańska, 'Paryż w oczach polskich uchodźców u progu wielkiej emigracji', *Acta Universitatis Lobziensis* 63 (1998) 5–22. On Greco-Polish relations in general, J. Knopek, *Polacy w Grecji. Historia i współczesność* (Bydgoszcz 1997).

21 J. Knopek, 'Polscy podróżnicy w Grecji w XVIII i na początku XIX wieku', *Studia Polonijne* 25 (2004) 59–74.

22 J. Pachonski, 'Polacy na Wyspach Jonskich i niedoszła Rzeczpospolita Polsko-Grecka (1795–1807)', *Zeszyty Naukowe: Prace Historyczne WSP Katowice*, 71/1 (1964); S. Wasylewski, *Zycie polskie XIX w.* (Kraków 1962) 44.

23 D. Themeli-Katifori, *Το γαλλικό ενδιαφέρον για την Ελλάδα στην περίοδο του Καποδίστρια, 1828–31* (Athens 1985) 94–6, 102.

settlement in their lands.²⁴ More importantly, the rebels had to face repeated Russian pressure on the Capodistrian and post-Capodistrian administrations to cease granting asylum and to deport the fugitives, pressure Greece could hardly resist.²⁵ Eventually, the Poles were forced to further emigrate to the Ottoman Empire and Egypt, destinations that seemed to offer better employment opportunities.²⁶ Otto's government followed a similar policy, and when a Polish agent named Karocki came to Greece in 1833 to recruit volunteers for the Polish cause (like Usiglio), he was deported.²⁷ Exceptions, however, were possible. Andrzej Kallinski (Kaliński) was the most notable example, successfully managing to pursue a career in Greece, unlike most Philhellenes. A veteran of the 1830 rebellion, he managed to enter Otto's entourage after wandering in Europe for some years and accompanied him in Greece in 1833, becoming one of his most trusted advisors. In his unusual life, Kallinski served first Otto and then George I as royal secretary until 1893, earned considerable influence, and established a 'dynasty' of his own with his grandson, Andreas Roidis-Kallinskis, serving under kings Constantine I and Paul well into the twentieth century.²⁸

Remaining in Greece could thus be feasible for those foreigners who could demonstrate evidence of competence and loyalty despite their unlawful past, especially since the kingdom was in need of trained personnel.²⁹ Such was the case of François Graillard, a French Philhellene, Saint-Simonian and officer, who arrived in Greece in late 1821 and managed to rise to high military posts during the revolution. In 1829, he served as a liaison between the Greeks and the French army of General Maison in the Morea, but after Capodistria's death, he failed to prevent widespread lawlessness. After the Bavarians arrived, Graillard was appointed head of the new gendarmerie corps, and in 1835, he presented Otto with detailed plans to advance Greece's resources. Among other things, he suggested the establishment of populous colonies of foreign settlers to boost the damaged agriculture.³⁰ Graillard's suggestions were not put into force, partly because his Saint-Simonian beliefs, which were considered radical, resulted in repeated dismissals and reappointments between 1835 and 1848,

24 J. Skowronek, *Sprzymierzeniecy narodów bałkańskich*, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe (Warsaw 1983) 133, 140; J. Knopek, 'Udział emigrantów polskich w życiu politycznym i ekonomicznym nowożytnego państwa greckiego (1821–1918)', *Studia Polonijne* 23 (2002) 57–78, esp. 63–4.

25 Ιστορικό και Διπλωματικό Αρχείο Υπουργείου Εξωτερικών (ΑΥΕΞ), file: Πολωνοί πρόσφυγες στην Ελλάδα, 1834; Frary, *Russia*, 170.

26 S. Kalemka, *Liczebności rozmieszczenie Wielkiej Emigracji, w: Liczba i rozmieszczenie Polaków w świecie, pod red. W. Wrzesin'skiego* (Wrocław 1981); J. Knopek, 'Specyfika polskiego wychodźstwa ekonomicznego i wojskowego w Egipcie do początku XX wieku', *Studia Polonijne* 21 (2000) 55–74.

27 Z. Mineyko, *Z tajgi pod Akropol. Wspomnienia z lat 1848–1866* (Warsaw 1971) 485.

28 Knopek, 'Emigrantów Polskich', 69–70, 75–77 n. 68; idem, *Polacy w Grecji*; Sinko, 'Udział Polaków'.

29 J. Petropoulos, *Politics and Statecraft in the Kingdom of Greece, 1833–1843* (Princeton 1968) 162–5.

30 Ch. Dimakopoulou, 'Ο σαινσιμονιστής Francois Graillard περί των ελληνικών πραγμάτων (παρατηρήσεις και προτάσεις)', *Δελτίον της Ιστορικής και Εθνολογικής Εταιρείας της Ελλάδος* 22 (1979) 307–448; C. Baloglou, 'Προσπάθειες διαδόσεως των ιδεών του Saint-Simon και πρακτικής των εφαρμογής στον Ελλαδικό χώρο 1825–1837', *Σπουδαί* 53/3 (2003) 77–108, esp. 91–3.

until his final retirement in 1853. The similarity to Schneider's then-recent proposals does not seem to be coincidental, because debates were taking place in France about the emigration of the redundant workforce, which could then be used to develop more thinly populated regions such as Algeria and, in this case, Greece. Graillard's case is thus representative of the wider activity of Saint-Simonian groups across the Mediterranean after they were banned in France in 1832.³¹ Much shorter were the stays of other Saint-Simonians in Greece, who were less persuasive about their loyalty and benevolent intentions. Gustave d'Eichtal was the best-known among them, setting foot in Nafplio in 1833 and, thanks to Kolettis' patronage, being appointed secretary to the new Bureau of Public Finance (Graillard did not belong to the Bureau). Eichtal's activities, however, irritated more conservative circles in the Regency headed by Joseph von Armansperg, who engineered his removal from office and his decision to abandon Greece in 1835.³²

When the European revolutions of 1848 broke out, there was hardly any reminder of the previous generation of revolutionary exiles in Greece. Regardless of their nationalities and reasons for moving to Greece, most had left and their plans for propagating radical ideas, reorganizing the country's productive basis, or simply making a living had largely failed. The handful that remained had by then become fully integrated. By the middle of Otto's reign, though, many more foreign fugitives appeared on Greece's shores, and their presence tested the resilience of state institutions, upsetting mid-nineteenth-century Greek society.

Political exiles of the 1848–9 revolutions in Greece

The 1848–9 revolutions brought widespread political and military conflict across Europe and increased transnational mobility, creating the largest modern political migrations Europe had ever seen.³³ The Italian peninsula in particular was convulsed by a series of wars and revolutions.³⁴ From January to March 1848, rebels seemed to gain the upper hand in Naples and Venice, where the revolutionary Republic of San Marco was proclaimed. In January 1849, yet another revolutionary regime was formed in Rome, while the pope was forced into temporary exile. Searching for allies and aware of

31 M. Emerit, 'Les saint-simoniens en Grece et en Turquie', *Revue des Etudes sud-est européennes*, 13/2 (1975) 241–51; O. Abi-Mershed, *Apostles of Modernity. Saint-Simonians and the Civilizing Mission in Algeria* (Stanford 2010); P. Pilbeam, *Saint-Simonians in Nineteenth-Century France: From Free Love to Algeria* (London 2014).

32 D. Vikelas, 'Ο Γουσταύος Έιχταλ εν Ελλάδι', in *Διαλέξεις και αναμνήσεις* (Athens 1893) 257–331.

33 Tóth, *Exiled Generation*, 1–19; A. Körner (ed.), *1848: A European Revolution? International Ideas and National Memories of 1848* (London 2000); J. Sperber, *The European Revolutions, 1848–1851* (2nd edn, Cambridge 2011); J. Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century*, trans. P. Camiller (Princeton 2014) 543–7.

34 There is a huge literature on the Italian revolutions of 1848–49. See the reference work C. Spellanzon and E. Di Nolfo (eds), *Storia del risorgimento e dell'unità d'Italia* (Milan 1933–65) IV–VIII.

Greece's revolutionary past and constitutional institutions, the insurgents in Rome, Sicily, and Venice tried to establish diplomatic relations with Greece, though Otto received their emissaries hostilely in Athens.³⁵ Unsurprisingly, after the collapse of the revolutionary front in Italy in summer 1849, the fleeing rebels turned for asylum to (among others) Greece, whose (in their perception) illustrious past and liberal present seemed to promise favourable conditions for exiles. Furthermore, the British anti-refugee policy in the Ionian Islands and Malta motivated even more refugees to head to Greece after learning of the warm welcome their compatriots had initially received there.³⁶

Among the exiles, who arrived in Greece between July and October 1849, were several intellectuals who, moved by their Philhellenism and classicist background, were able to communicate smoothly with the educated upper classes in Greece. They included the poet Eduardo Fusco, the physician Pierviviano Zecchini, and the playwrights Ferdinando Rossi and Tommaso Zauli Saianni. Analogies between the Italian Risorgimento and the Greek war of 1821 featured commonly in their literary works, where they frequently paralleled their own experience in exile and the sufferings of the belligerent Greeks a few decades earlier. The Souliotes and especially their leader, Markos Botsaris, occupied a preeminent position in their poems and tragedies, followed by other famous figures like Karaiskakis and Miaoulis.³⁷ Furthermore, Zecchini wrote a thorough treatise entitled *Quadri della Grecia moderna*, in which he described contemporary Greek norms and customs. He also confronted the polemics of Edmond About and Jakob Philipp Fallmerayer, arguing that modern Greeks were not backward and were indeed worthy of their ancient ancestors.³⁸ On a broader level, a considerable number of Italians expressed their willingness to stay and applied for Greek citizenship.³⁹ At least some who could afford it started families in Greece, including the Neapolitan journalist Francesco Serao, whose daughter, the future novelist Matilde Serao, was born in Patras in 1856.⁴⁰ Upper-class Greeks sympathized with their sophisticated guests. In Patras, the distinguished Geroussis, Rigopoulos, and Drakopoulos families took an active interest

35 Venice, 6 September 1848, ΓΑΚ, AvO, file 71: ελληνο-βενετικές σχέσεις 1848; *Ελπίς*, 3 April 1848; 15 May 1849; V. and M. Bouse (eds), *Ανέκδοτες επιστολές της Βασίλισσας Αμαλίας στον πατέρα της, 1836–1853* (Athens 2011) II 513, 515.

36 Austrian ambassador to foreign minister, No. 64, 14 August 1849, Österreichisches Staatsarchiv (ÖS), Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv (HHStA), Ministerium des Äußern, A-Akten, Krt. 2: Zl. 508/1849; S. Gekas, *Xenocracy: State, Class, and Colonialism in the Ionian Islands 1815–1864* (Oxford and New York 2017).

37 E. Fusco, *Poesie varie* (Corfu 1850); idem, *Il salmista Suliotta* (Athens 1850); P. Zecchini, *Lambro Zavella* (Milan 1858); L. Rossi, *Una gloria di Grecia antica ed una lancia spezzata in favore di Grecia moderna* (Trieste 1872); T. Zauli Saianni, *Μάρκος Βότσαρης*, trans. G. Sfikas (Zante 1867).

38 P. Zecchini, *Quadri della Grecia moderna* (Florence 1876 [1864]) passim.

39 Patras police to prefect of Achaia, No. 245/158, 20 February 1852, ΓΑΚ, Αρχείο υπουργείου Εσωτερικών (ΑΥΕΣ), file: refugees 1852. Attached is the list of the 102 applicants for Greek citizenship.

40 D. Grange, *L'Italie et la Méditerranée (1896–1911): Les fondements d'une politique étrangère* (Rome 1994) I 449–50.

in the refugees' literary activities and assisted them financially.⁴¹ Italian-bred Greek intellectuals were also affected. Georgios Zalokostas translated Fusco's poetry into Greek, and (according to Tasos Vournas) Emmanuel Roidis was influenced by the exiles' anticlerical spirit in his *Πάπισσα Ιωάννα* (1866).⁴²

Nonetheless, the above contacts concerned a rather small segment of the émigrés. As Konstantina Zanou has argued, the masses of exiles after 1848, along with the formation of new states in the Mediterranean, led to the fragmentation of the previously united cultural space in the Adriatic and Ionian seas between Italy and Greece. The aforementioned intellectuals, who had been brought up in a culturally blurred environment, constituted the last such 'Greco-Italian' generation.⁴³ The pragmatic needs created by the arrival of thousands of refugees in Greece could not be resolved by amicable relations between a handful of intellectuals. Therefore, although initially the refugees were indeed well received and offered material support from charitable associations, the sheer size of the problem meant this pattern could not last long.⁴⁴ According to the interior ministry, a total of 1,109 armed, combat-trained and potentially radical refugees from Italy arrived, mostly in Athens, Patras, and Syros.⁴⁵ Including illegal migration, their total number might have exceeded 2,000,⁴⁶ though Zecchini claimed (rather excessively) that they numbered more than 3,000.⁴⁷ For the port city of Patras, to give just one example, this meant a sudden population rise of about five per cent (about 700 newcomers), enough to cause serious disturbances.⁴⁸

Unlike their refined compatriots, who could often look to wealthy patrons to support them, the bulk of the refugees struggled to survive and find employment in the midst of poor living conditions. Acute hygiene problems soon arose, due to the inadequate state infrastructure.⁴⁹ In Patras, the police reported in autumn 1849 that there were masses of wretched and unemployed Italians. Due to their miserable living conditions, the first deaths of refugees (even high-ranking ones) were recorded in autumn and winter 1849.⁵⁰ In Syros, Hermoupolis coped with similar difficulties, as many refugees had

41 M. C. Chatzioannou, 'Patras: Greeks and foreigners in the port of Patras during the 19th century', in E. Drakopoulou and D. Dimitropoulos (eds), *Sailing in the Ionian with History at the Helm* (Athens 2015) 17–27, esp. 21.

42 T. Vournas, *Η ιστορική και φιλολογική καταγωγή της «Πάπισσας Ιωάννας» του Ροΐδη* (Athens 1949).

43 Zanou, *Transnational Patriotism*, 207–14; also Reill, *Nationalists*, 3.

44 C. Kerofilas, *La Grecia e l'Italia nel Risorgimento Italiano* (Florence 1919) 17–48; M. C. Chatzioannou, 'La presenza degli Italiani nella Grecia indipendente', in *Risorgimento greco e filellenismo italiano* (Rome 1986) 137–43; Aliprantis, 'Political refugees', passim.

45 P. Iliou, *Ελληνική Βιβλιογραφία, 1800–1863* (Athens 1983) 161–4 for the interior ministry circulars.

46 Austrian ambassador to foreign minister, No. 71, 23 October 1849, ÖS, HHStA, Ministerium des Äußern, Politisches Archiv (PA), XVI. Griechenland, Krt.17.

47 Zecchini, *Grecia moderna*, 13–14.

48 N. Bakounakis, *Πάτρα: Μια ελληνική πρωτεύουσα στον 19^ο αιώνα, 1828–1860* (Athens 1988) 53–4.

49 T. Barlagiannis, *Η υγειονομική συγκρότηση του ελληνικού κράτους (1833–1845)* (Athens 2018).

50 Examples in *Αιών*, 29 October 1849; *Μίνως*, 24 October 1849; *Αχαϊκός Κήρυξ*, 26 October 1849; interior minister to state prefects, No. 20, 569, 5 October 1849, Αρχείο της Ιστορικής και Εθνολογικής Εταιρείας της

turned to beggary.⁵¹ Additionally, the municipal hospital was quickly occupied by suffering Italians, Hungarians, and Poles, despite communal mobilization.⁵² The sick émigrés further worried the local notables because their diseases, if not contained, might also infect the rest of the island.⁵³ Similar concerns were expressed regarding the Venetian refugees, most of whom settled in Patras and who suffered from cholera thanks to the long Austrian siege of their city.⁵⁴ In Athens, the problem appeared to be even more urgent due to refugee overpopulation and the fact that many refugees headed there in a vain search for better prospects. According to the refugees' own accounts, poor health was widespread in their ranks and many died, homeless and helpless, because of the inability of the Athens hospital to cure them.⁵⁵

Alongside the much more numerous ethnic Italian exiles, a sizable group of Poles also found their way to Greece. Unlike the Polish insurgents in the Ottoman Empire after 1849, who had participated in the Hungarian revolution and fled via the Danubian Principalities, the Poles in Greece arrived there from Italy. They belonged to the so-called Mickiewicz Legion (or Polish Legion) and numbered about 160 soldiers upon their arrival in Greece.⁵⁶ The legionaries had fought in Rome and, after 1849, followed their Italian comrades-in-arms into exile. Led by Aleksander Izenszmid de Milbitz, they initially headed to Corfu, where the British authorities forbade them to settle, fearing that they might cause unrest, and thereafter moved to Greece.⁵⁷ In early August 1849, the Poles arrived in Patras in high spirits, confident they could march northwards through the Balkans and join the Hungarian front, which was in its final days.⁵⁸ Soon they were obliged to change their plans. On 30 August, the Hungarians surrendered and Milbitz's Poles were left with no choice but to stay in Greece.⁵⁹ At

Ελλάδας (AIEE); K. Triantafyllou (ed.), *Ιστορικών Λεξικόν των Πατρών*, 3rd edn (Patras 1995) I 905; Bouse (eds), *Επιστολές της Αμαλίας*, II 543–4.

51 Austrian ambassador to foreign minister, No. 47C, 12 November 1850, ÖS, HHStA, Ministerium des Äußern, Informationsbüro, Actes de Haute Police (AHP), Athen 1850: 2. Beilage.

52 ΓΑΚ Κυκλάδων, Δημοτικό Αρχείο Ερμούπολης (ΔΑΕ), Αρχείο Νοσοκομείου Σύρου, 'Βιβλίον των εισερχομένων και εξερχομένων ασθενών του Νοσοκομείου Ερμούπολεως από Φεβρουάριο 1844 ως Νοέμβριο 1853'; *Αίολος*, 8 October 1849.

53 C. Loukos, 'Επιδημία και κοινωνία: Η χολέρα στην Ερμούπολη της Σύρου (1854)', *Μνήμων* 14 (1992) 49–69.

54 P. Ginsborg, *Daniele Manin and the Venetian Revolution of 1848–49* (Cambridge 1979) 355–6.

55 Italians of Athens to interior minister, No. 40, 12 February 1851, ΓΑΚ, ΑΥΕΣ, file: refugees 1851.

56 Knopek, 'Emigrantów Polskich', 64–5; idem, 'Knopek, Polacy W Xix-Wiecznych', 48; Bouse (eds), *Επιστολές της Αμαλίας*, II 543; W. Mickiewicz, *Legion Mickiewicza. Rok 1848* (Krakow 1921) 376–86; S. Kieniewicz, *Legion Mickiewicza 1848–1849* (Warsaw 1955) 163.

57 E. Michel, 'Esuli italiani nelle Isole Ionie, 1849', *Estratto dalla Rassegna storica del Risorgimento* 37 (1950) 323–52, esp. 328–29, 332. On Milbitz, S. Kieniewicz, 'Izenszmid-Milbitz Aleksander', in *Polski słownik biograficzny* 10 (1960) 197–8.

58 Austrian ambassador to foreign minister, No. 112/9, 3 February 1852; ÖS, HHStA, AHP, Athen 1853, 3. und 4. Beilagen; ΓΑΚ, AvO, file 71: Μίλβιτς.

59 I. Roberts, *Nicholas I and the Russian Intervention in Hungary* (London 1991) 165–205.

first, they benefited from the charity provided by the Greeks, and the interior ministry also employed them temporarily in road construction in Attica.⁶⁰ Yet their prospects in Greece seemed to be coming to an end because they faced the same problems as the rest of the exiles. The legionnaire Józef Rykowski recalled later their damp and unhealthy lodgings and lack of resources, while another, Michał Borucki, wrote in a letter to the leading Polish poet and revolutionary Adam Mickiewicz:

As time passes, Greece is turning even colder against us. The treachery of Görgey [the last leader of the Hungarian rebels, who signed the 1849 armistice] and the simultaneous fall of Hungary shattered our dreams and brought us to an extremely unpleasant condition. You had to look for a job in such a poor land, while, especially in the villages, the locals clearly disliked us.⁶¹

This revealing witness, who also sheds light on how the lower strata in Greece behaved toward the exiles, appears to be representative of the general mood among the Poles. Those among them who possessed technical skills attempted to work as artisans in Athens, but these efforts offered limited success.⁶² Meanwhile, during their time in Greece, twelve Poles died from illness.⁶³ Confronted by such dead-ends, the remaining legionaries started emigrating to the Ottoman Empire by 1850–51, in search of brighter employment prospects.⁶⁴ By early 1852, Milbitz himself was one of the few remaining, probably thanks to his connections to wealthy Athenians, but, as we shall see below, even he eventually followed the same route as his compatriots.

The exiles and the Greek government: general attitude and individual aspects

The Greek authorities were not unmoved by these distressing conditions. Although the Kanaris government had shown an active interest in the refugees in summer 1849, their number was emptying the state coffers. Otto and his ministers had to face a pressing dilemma: the liberal legacy of the 1821 revolution and the 1844 constitution had attracted numerous revolutionary fugitives to Greece, whom the state had no means to sustain and was also essentially unwilling to keep offering hospitality in the long run. Otto and his Court had looked with anxiety at what happened in Europe in

60 Bouse (eds), *Επιστολές της Αμαλίας*, II 571; *Αθηνά*, 5 January 1851.

61 Quoted in J. Kłoczowski, 'Legia polska we Włoszech w latach 1848–1849 w pamięci jej weterana', in *Losy Polaków w XIX i XX w. Studia ofiarowane prof. Stefanowi Kieniewiczowi w 80-tą rocznicę, urodzin* (Warsaw 1987) 483–98, 495.

62 Austrian ambassador to foreign minister, No. 1C, 7 January 1851, ÖS, HHStA, AHP, Athen 1851: 1. Beilage concerning an advertisement published by the Poles in which they offered to manufacture medallions depicting the Greek fighters of 1821.

63 The names of the fallen Poles in Greece are listed in Knopek, 'Emigrantów Polskich', 65.

64 Austrian ambassador to foreign minister, No. 38, 1 March 1853, ÖS, HHStA, AHP, Athen 1853.

1848, fearing for the stability of the Greek throne.⁶⁵ The arrival of the exiles from Italy soon thereafter only increased this insecurity, while the logistical deadlock they created did not leave many policy alternatives apart from that of a conservative withdrawal. Moreover, lacking employment, the exiles often wandered around cities, posing risks to both security and hygiene and rendering additional measures imperative. The Greek cabinet began to adopt clear anti-refugee measures on 22 August 1849, when interior minister Christidis forbade future refugee settlement in Athens for the first time, while later, the prohibition was extended to cover Patras and Syros. This restrictive agenda culminated in the closure of the borders to new refugee arrivals altogether in early October 1849.⁶⁶

Among the top echelons of government, the motive force behind this new policy was queen Amalia, who from 1850 to 1852 frequently acted as regent, with enlarged decision-making powers, because Otto was often abroad.⁶⁷ In harmony with the likeminded Austrian ambassador Friedrich von Ingelheim, Amalia scolded minister Christidis for his initial carefree policy, while also highlighting the geopolitical consequences of accepting the émigrés.⁶⁸ She underlined that such naïve notions of philanthropy might have grave consequences for the country's future. In addition to the increase in public spending, the Great Powers, on whose goodwill Greece depended, might see the granting of asylum to so many outlaws in a negative light. Instead, the queen insisted, the government needed to turn away the exiles and ignore pro-refugee public opinion, hoping that the Powers might reward Greece for this lawful behaviour.⁶⁹

For this reason Amalia was frightened when a French fleet approached Piraeus in 1850, because she thought the French had arrived to punish Greece. She came to this conclusion especially because the French ambassador in Athens, Édouard Thouvenel, had been lobbying the Greek Court to adopt a stricter anti-refugee agenda.⁷⁰ Even more alarming was Russia's aggressive reaction to the matter. In October 1849, the Russian minister in Athens, Persiany, notified the Greek government that the Tsar would not tolerate Greece becoming a hub of revolution.⁷¹ More specifically, St Petersburg threatened that it would force Greece to repay its loans to Russia, withdraw its diplomatic staff, and order Russian subjects to leave the country, should Greece

65 M. Sakellariou, 'Hellenism and 1848', in F. Fejtö (ed.), *The opening of an era, 1848: an historical symposium* (London 1948) 377–93; T. Vournas, 'Ανέκδοτα διπλωματικά έγγραφα για τα γεγονότα του 1848 στην Ελλάδα', *Τομές* 34–35 (March–April 1978) 31–9.

66 In detail Aliprantis, 'Political refugees'.

67 ΓΑΚ, AvO, Regentschaft Ihrer Majestät der Königin, 1850/51, 1852.

68 Austrian ambassador to foreign minister, No.1C, 7 January 1851, ÖS, HHStA, AHP, Athen 1851.

69 Bouse (eds), *Επιστολές της Αμαλίας*, II 541, 546–7.

70 Ibid. 560–1; Austrian ambassador to foreign minister, No. 48, 22 March 1853, ÖS, HHStA, AHP, Athen 1853, 1. Beilage.

71 British ambassador to foreign secretary, 30 October 1849, The National Archives (TNA), Foreign Office (FO), 32/170; *Αιών*, 22 December 1849; Bouse (eds), *Επιστολές της Αμαλίας*, II 549.

continue to accept foreign fugitives.⁷² The Greek government could hardly resist this ultimatum; in any case, it had by then no intention of attracting further foreigners. Russian pressures continued in 1850, with demands for the deportation of the Polish refugees from Greece, but the Greek foreign minister responded that they had engaged in no criminal activity on Greek soil and there was therefore no legal basis for prosecution.⁷³

After early 1850, a new cabinet led by the conservative admiral Antonios Kriezis (1849–54) and backed by Otto blocked new arrivals and transport within Attica, increased monitoring, and obstructed political activities among the refugees.⁷⁴ Furthermore, it started coercing those already settled into emigrating again by covering their travel expenses, mostly to the Ottoman Empire.⁷⁵ At a domestic level, the police aimed to limit unlawful behaviour and sporadic municipal violence by increasing patrols in Athens and Patras, where most exiles resided, and placing secret agents among them to obtain intimate knowledge of their endeavours.⁷⁶ Finally, the interior ministry began conducting censuses on the exiles, so as to gather precise data on their numbers and occupations.⁷⁷

With settlement in the cities becoming gradually ruled out, the refugees had to engineer new solutions if they wished to stay in Greece. One alternative was to turn to the smaller towns, or to head for the thinly populated countryside and try cultivate its resources. Having such ideas in mind, Venetian refugee Marco Antonio Canini, who had arrived from Rome in mid-August 1849, described in a letter to his friend Niccolò Tommaseo, himself in exile in Corfu, the wretched condition of the Italians and Poles in Athens. Canini suggested the establishment of an Italian agricultural colony in the Isthmus of Corinth. He wished to form a joint stock company in order to gather funds for the project, and he planned for the settlers to use their technical skills to build a canal across the Isthmus.⁷⁸ An Italian committee was brought together to advance this cause, manned by the refugee notables Massimino Allé from Rome and Giuseppe Clementi and Andrea Meneghini from Padua. Canini was initially confident about his scheme, since the proposal had earned the approval of the Athens chamber of

72 British ambassador to foreign secretary, 8 November 1849, TNA, FO, 195/335.

73 Russian delegate to Greek foreign minister, No. 3700, 3880, 8, 25 July 1850, AYEE, file: refugees 1850.

74 Αρχείο Σύγχρονης Κοινωνικής Ιστορίας (ΑΣΚΙ), Αρχείο οικογένειας Κριεζή, file 1; Austrian ambassador to foreign minister, No. 4C, No. 6a, 22, 29 January 1850, ÖS, HHStA, AHP, Athen 1850; interior minister to state prefects, No. 790, 15,565, 21 January, 4 September 1850, AIEE.

75 Austrian ambassador to foreign minister, No.11.13, 5 March 1850, ÖS, HHStA, PA, XVI. 17; idem, No. 22, 24 June 1851, AHP, Athen 1851.

76 Idem, No. 64, 14 August 1849, ÖS, HHStA, A-Akten, Zl. 508/1849; idem, No. 47C, 12 November 1850; No. 112/9, 3 February 1852, ÖS, HHStA, AHP, Athen 1850, 1852.

77 Copy: Athens police to interior minister, No .2270/2559, 439/302, 2660, 1255, 18, 19, 26, 28 April 1850, AYEE, file: refugees 1850.

78 Canini to Tommaseo, 9 September 1849, Bibliotheca Nazionale di Firenze (BNF), Fondo Tommaseo (FT), cassetta 186; M. A. Canini, *Vingt ans d'exil* (Paris 1868) 76–7; F. Guida, *L'Italia e il Risorgimento balcanico: Marco Antonio Canini* (Rome 1984) 59–78.

commerce and attracted the support of several Italians, and he aspired for even more to later join him.⁷⁹ Nonetheless, this ambitious undertaking failed to materialize due to a lack of funds and an unwillingness among the Greeks to contribute financially.⁸⁰ A bitter Canini kept writing to Tommaseo that the Greeks no longer felt sympathy for the Venetians, since all of them struggled to gain access to the same scarce resources of the land.⁸¹ In Syros, where Canini afterwards moved, a similar plan to organize an Italian community in Ano Syros also failed, due to the antipathy of the conservative native Catholics.⁸²

Living in poverty and running rapidly out of choices, the exiles realized that Greece was really a very different place from the one in their philhellenic fantasies. Encouraged by the Greek government after 1850, they began to seek French, British, Belgian, and American passports in order to sail for the richer Ottoman Empire, Western Europe, or USA, where many of their co-nationals had already found refuge.⁸³ The gradual numerical decline of the émigré communities transformed both relations between the Greek authorities and the exiles and those among the exiles themselves. Their remnants formed closer communal bonds in order to overcome their everyday adversities, whereas the Greek government felt strong enough to begin prosecuting seemingly radical collective initiatives, as well as specific individuals deemed perilous to the regime. In November 1850, a group of Italians in Athens founded a society of mutual assistance to cope with their pressing problems, though political discussions must have taken place. Moreover, the leaders of the society, the Pole Alexander Milbitz and the Italian Francesco Gherardi Dragomani, had notable revolutionary pasts.⁸⁴ The fact that the refugees seemed to have become politically organized, along with suspicions of contact with leading Greek liberals such as Pavlos Kallergis and Giannis Makrygiannis, led the government to act openly against the group. With the support of Amalia and the Austrian and Neapolitan ambassadors, the police banned the association in early 1851, despite refugee protests.⁸⁵ The participating Italians

79 Canini to Tommaseo, 9 September 1849, BNF, FT, 186; *Αιών*, 4, 14 September 1849; Austrian ambassador to foreign minister, No.72.A-B, 30 October 1849, No. 9C, 19 February 1850, ÖS, HHStA, PA, XVI. 17; idem, No. 85, 20 May 1853, ÖS, HHStA, AHP, Athen 1853.

80 Idem, No.70A93, 9 October 1849, ÖS, HHStA, PA, XVI. 17; Canini, *Vingt ans* 77.

81 Canini to Tommaseo, 30 October, 15 December 1849, BNF, FT, 186.

82 *Αιών*, 4 September 1849; A. Bistarelli, *Gli esuli del Risorgimento* (Bologna 2011) 224–5.

83 Austrian ambassador to foreign minister, No. 69, 71, 1, 9 April 1853; Beilagen: Wochenberiche, 25.-31. März, 1.-8. April 1853, ÖS, HHStA, AHP, Athen 1853; Archives de l'État en Belgique, Ministère de la Justice. Administration de la Sûreté publique. Service de la Police des Etrangers. Dossiers généraux: III. Police des étrangers réfugiés politiques. 246 Démocrates italiens et hongrois réfugiés en Grèce et dont les passeports avaient été visés par le consul belge à Athènes à l'effet de se rendre en Belgique, 1849.

84 Austrian ambassador to foreign minister, No.49.A-C., 3 December 1850, ÖS, HHStA, PA, XVI. 17; idem, No. 50B, 10 December 1850, AHP, Athen 1850; idem, No. 1C, 100/9, 7, 21 January 1851, AHP, Athen 1851.

85 Athens police to interior minister, No.40, 12 February 1851, ΓΑΚ, ΑΥΕΕ, file: refugees 1851; *Αθηναίς*, 5 January 1851.

were threatened with deportation if they continued to associate politically. Thereafter, the shrinking émigré communities seem to have largely withdrawn from open political activities. For example, they appeared indifferent when, in 1852, the wandering Romanian forty-eighter Alexandru Golescu attempted to establish a local branch of the Central European Democratic Committee in Athens and to publish a newspaper propagating the revolutionary fraternization of the Balkan peoples with the Italians and the Hungarians.⁸⁶

The foreign refugees lacked access to local networks that would have allowed them to negotiate a kinder treatment, and were thus easily isolable victims. Other Italians, with deeper roots in the country and more adequate connections, thrived better. One of them was Antonio Morandi, a veteran Bolognese rebel who, after murdering the police director of Modena in 1822 and escaping arrest, settled in Greece two years later. Thereafter he returned to Italy to join the uprisings of 1830 only to be arrested by the Austrians and Venice and later on escape from his prison in late 1831 with the help of the local French consul.⁸⁷ Hoping to make his pursuers lose track of him, Morandi fled yet again to Greece, where he started a new career as a gendarmerie officer.⁸⁸ Nonetheless, even this position was not destined to be permanent. The Bolognese adventurer left his post to join the Italian revolution in 1848, but later returned to Greece along with the other refugees.⁸⁹ In Patras, he was arrested as an army deserter, thanks to a request from the Austrian embassy and the hostility of certain ministers. He was then imprisoned for six weeks in Akronafplia in 1850, but subsequently released after the successful mediation of the rest of the cabinet and his patroness Amalia, otherwise the most adamant opponent of the exiles.⁹⁰ Morandi settled thereafter in Athens, where he maintained ties with notable Greeks and Italians, as well as with the French and Piedmontese consuls. At that time, the Austrian ambassador kept him under constant surveillance, as he was suspicious of Morandi's past and potential future plans to provoke turmoil.⁹¹ Yet no direct action was taken afterwards against him, and he was allowed to continue living in Athens. After Italian

86 Liakos, *Ιταλική ενοποίηση* 55–6; A. Jianu, *A Circle of Friends: Romanian Revolutionaries and Political Exile, 1840–1859* (Leiden and Boston 2011). The CEDC was a London-based association founded by Mazzini and other revolutionaries in 1850 to advance international political collaboration among the exiles, but it soon became paralysed by disagreements among its founding members.

87 ÖS, HHStA, IB, Vorträge in Polizeisachen (1831–1835) 1-1-8 Vortrag des Staatskanzlers über die Flucht des modenesischen Insurgenten Morandi aus dem Gefängnis in Venedig und die diesbezügliche Unterstützung des französischen Konsulatsverwesers Alfred Mimaut (19.12.1831).

88 ΓΑΚ, ΑνΟ, Προσωπικές υποθέσεις, Μ8: μοίραρχος Μοράντης (Morandi); St Clair, *That Greece Might Still Be Free*, 257, 267.

89 Αιών, 10 September 1849; Austrian ambassador to foreign minister, No. 71, 23 October 1849, ÖS, HHStA, PA, XVI. 17.

90 Idem, No. 34, 28A, 6 August, 3 September 1850, ÖS, HHStA, PA, XVI. 17; A. Morandi, *Il mio giornale dal 1848 al 1850* (Modena 1867).

91 Austrian ambassador to foreign minister, No. 18/8, No. 37, 48/4, 18, 25 March, 1 April 1853, ÖS, HHStA, AHP, 1853: Beilagen: Wochenberichten, 10.-17., 17.-24., 25.-31. März 1853.

unification, Morandi finally repatriated to Rome, where he petitioned for an imperial pardon for the crimes he had committed on Austrian soil and passed away a few years later.⁹² Morandi's recurrent movement between Italy and Greece can be seen as proof of the liberal and radical bonds between the two countries in the given period. It also carries evidence however of the still poorly structured and manned Greek public administration in the 1830s and 1840s. Insufficient police surveillance and the shortage of trained personnel left ample opportunities for outlaws such as Morandi (and others after 1848) to settle and even thrive in Greece particularly if they had access to the right connections among the native political elites as well as to influential foreign representatives.

Nonetheless, there is evidence to suggest that by the early 1850s, the state was engaged in a serious effort to police more extensively potentially dangerous groups and individuals. After all, even the well-connected Morandi himself was imprisoned at least for a short time. Understandably, most of his newly-arrived compatriots, who were also isolated from the local power networks, faced much gloomier prospects. In February 1852, the Austrian embassy informed the government that Milbitz and his Polish comrades were organizing a conspiracy to overthrow Otto and establish a Balkan republican federation.⁹³ These accusations were naturally exaggerated; Milbitz's group was probably but one radical, though weak, association among several then in Greece.⁹⁴ Although the royal couple found these revolutionary visions laughable, the police reacted instantly.⁹⁵ The Poles, as well as Greeks who were considered their associates, such as Makrygiannis and Theodoros Negris, a prominent Athenian, had their houses searched. Revolutionary proclamations were indeed confiscated.⁹⁶ This provided adequate justification for the rapid deportation of a total of thirty-six Poles and Italians accused of conspiratorial activity (including Gherardi-Dragomani), while Makrygiannis also faced a trial.⁹⁷ The official government position that state security was threatened was hardly seen as credible by the liberal opposition, yet more conservative observers were persuaded.⁹⁸ Of these, the war minister Spyromilios even engineered a monarchist coup using the ostensible peril

92 ÖS, HHStA, Gesandtschaftsarchiv Rom Vatikan III, 78a-18 M28: Morandi-Zanotti, Majestätsgesuch um Begnadigung (1863).

93 Austrian ambassador to foreign minister, No. 112/9, N.5A-B, 3, 17 February 1852, ÖS, HHStA, AHP, Athen 1852; *Πρακτικά των Συνεδριάσεων της Βουλής, Συνεδρίαση ΞΖ' 10 Ιουνίου 1855* (Athens 1855) 417.

94 G. Kordatos, *Μεγάλη ιστορία της Ελλάδας* (Athens 1958) XI 577–9; V. Sfyroeras, 'Η "Αδελφότης των Ευαγγελιζομένων", μυστική επαναστατική οργάνωσις του 1849', *Επιστημονική Επετηρίς της Φιλοσοφικής Σχολής του Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών* II/23 (1972–73) 204–36.

95 Bouse (eds), *Επιστολές της Αμαλίας*, II 767–71.

96 G. Vlachogiannis (ed.), *Στρατηγού Μακρυγιάννη Απομνημονεύματα* (Athens 1907) II 445–7.

97 Athens police to interior minister, No. 486, 537, 2883, 1288, 6, 7, 13, 21 February 1852, ΓΑΚ, ΑΥΕΣ, file: refugees 1852. The number is given in Austrian ambassador to foreign minister, No. 7, 2 March 1852, ÖS, HHStA, PA, XVI. 18.

98 For instance *Αιών*, 7 February; *Εφημερίς της Ανατολής*, 23 February 1852 for the liberal critique, and N. Dragoumis, *Ιστορικά σημειώσεις* (Athens 1879) II 227 for a conservative view.

posed by refugees as a pretext to abolish the constitutional regime and restore absolute monarchy. However, his plans were quickly revealed and forestalled under dubious circumstances before he managed to take any action.⁹⁹

The 1852 deportations were the largest operation against the exiles to that date, proving that the state was capable of limiting their actions. The Austrian ambassador, however, kept insisting on an even stronger anti-exile policy.¹⁰⁰ His pressure obtained new footing after February 1853, when an abortive Mazzinian uprising in Milan and an assassination attempt against the Habsburg emperor shocked the crowned heads of Europe.¹⁰¹ Otto and his ministers became more suspicious of the remnants of the émigré communities, renewing the general prohibition on new refugee arrivals in March.¹⁰² Two months later, a fugitive from Calabria, Oronzio Spinazzolla, was arrested for theft but, based on his confession, charged as an accomplice for conspiring to murder Otto.¹⁰³ As with Milbitz, the accusation was barely tenable, but its very existence indicates the insecurity of monarchical regimes across Europe after 1848. Trying to lighten his sentence, Spinazzolla turned in several of his old comrades. His testimony led to the arrest of Livio Zambecari, a high-profile Anconese revolutionary who had once employed Spinazzolla as his secretary.¹⁰⁴ The Austrians had been watching Zambecari while he lived in Patras after 1849. Seizing the opportunity, the Austrian embassy began actively lobbying against him.¹⁰⁵ In August 1853, after a few months of imprisonment, Spinazzolla was deported from Greece; Zambecari followed him shortly afterwards.¹⁰⁶

Conclusion

The deportations of Spinazzolla and Zambecari were the last significant incidents involving foreign refugees. Afterwards, the Crimean War and the question of Greece's involvement in it monopolized the attention of the Greek government and press, as well as of the foreign ambassadors, and the very few remaining exiles became

99 ΓΑΚ, Ιστορικά αρχεία Γιάννη Βλαχογιάννη, file 288: Έγγραφα δίκης Σπυρομήλιου, 1851–55; *Δίκη του υποστράτηγου πρώην υπουργού των στρατιωτικών Σ. Μήλιου* (Athens 1855).

100 Austrian ambassador to foreign minister, No.6B, 24 February 1852, ÖS, HHStA, AHP, Athen 1852.

101 W. Hansen (ed.), *Das Attentat auf Se. Majestät Kaiser Franz Josef I. am 18. Februar 1853* (Vienna 1853); L. Pollini, *La rivolta di Milano del 6 febbraio 1853* (Milan 1953).

102 Interior minister to state prefects, No. 27/4481, 6 March 1853, AIEE.

103 Austrian ambassador to foreign minister, No. 19A-D, 20 May 1853, ÖS, HHStA, AHP, Athen 1853; on Spinazzolla, ÖS, HHStA, IB, BM-Akten, Krt.110, Zl. 98/1857; *Archivio storico per la Calabria e la Lucania* 25–26 (1956) 295–6.

104 Austrian ambassador to foreign minister, No. 22B, 23C, 10, 17 June 1853, ÖS, HHStA, AHP, Athen 1853; ΓΑΚ, AvO, file: 399.3. Πολιτικές συνομοσίες.

105 Patras police to prefect of Achaëa, No. 576, 8 October 1851, ΓΑΚ, ΑΥΕΣ, file: refugees 1851; interior minister to foreign minister, No. 7496, 857, 2 October, 5 November 1851, ΑΥΕΞ, file: refugees 1851.

106 Austrian ambassador to foreign minister, No. 24A-C, 31C, 24 June, 12 August 1853, ÖS, HHStA, AHP, Athen 1853.

irrelevant.¹⁰⁷ In this respect, Greece seems similar to countries like the Ottoman Empire and Switzerland, where the forty-eighters found refuge right after 1849 before moving on to more permanent destinations such as Britain and the USA.¹⁰⁸ The few exiles of 1830 had already encountered indifference, if not hostility, in Greece—a rather unsurprising outcome in a country ravaged by a decade-long war. Later, not unlike the Philhellenes of the 1820s, the originally hopeful émigrés of 1848–49 became disillusioned with the meagre resources available to them and the Greek reality that seemed to bear little resemblance to the idealized land of Thucydides and Botsaris. A few well-educated exiles managed to cultivate amicable relations with the Greek elites, but they were exceptions. The great majority of their less privileged compatriots faced nothing but gloomy health and employment prospects, which eventually pushed them to further emigrate.

It was not only the limitations of the Greek job market but also the conservative attitudes of Otto and ministers that made the living conditions of the exiles unbearable, forcing them, directly or indirectly, to leave. Individuals such as Milbitz, Morandi, Gehardi-Dragomani, and Zambeccari suffered purges even though their ability to damage the monarchical regime or alter the status quo was minimal. Yet it should be strongly emphasized that Otto's behaviour was not notably different from that of his contemporary fellow monarchs. As Eric Hobsbawm has noted, the fear of revolution lasted for many years after 1848 and, especially during the immediate post-revolutionary period, governments were vigilant against anything that might resemble upheaval.¹⁰⁹

In this way the emergence of state policies after 1848 that aimed at suppressing revolutionary movements contributed to the marginalization of the more inclusive forms of nationalism and national solidarity.¹¹⁰ Moreover, although the 1848–49 revolutions were genuinely European in terms of their geographical reach, they were also responsible, as Christopher Clark has noted, for 'de-Europeanizing' the revolutionary movements across Europe.¹¹¹ This means that the initial (and rather

107 D. Donta, *Η Ελλάδα και οι Δυνάμεις κατά τον Κριμαϊκό Πόλεμον* (Thessaloniki 1973).

108 S. Freitag (ed.), *Exiles from European Revolutions. Refugees in Mid-Victorian England* (Oxford and New York 2003).

109 E. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital, 1848–75* (London 1975) 3. This means that Otto was no more 'reactionary' than Franz Joseph of Austria, Friedrich Wilhelm IV of Prussia, or the smaller German and Italian sovereigns, who all took active measures after 1848 to secure their territories from the threat of revolution, real or imaginary. The same applied even to France, which under Napoleon III turned gradually against foreign fugitives; and even Britain, whose government enforced stricter policing and deported certain exiles deemed perilous in 1855: W. Siemann, *'Deutschlands Ruhe, Sicherheit und Ordnung': Die Anfänge der politischen Polizei 1806–1866* (Tübingen 1985); H. Reiter, *Politisches Asyl im 19. Jahrhundert: die deutschen politischen Flüchtlinge des Vormärz und der Revolution von 1848/49 in Europa und den USA* (Berlin 1992); B. Porter, *The Refugee Question in Mid-Victorian Politics* (Cambridge 1979).

110 Reill, *Nationalists*, passim.

111 C. Clark, 'Why should we think about the Revolutions of 1848 now?', *London Review of Books* 41/5–7 (2019) 12–16.

superficial) fraternization of the ‘March days’ of 1848 was soon replaced by various rivalries and clashes among ethnic and social groups, which had not been visible before, such as the June days in Paris or the conflict between Germans and Czechs in Bohemia. This ‘de-Europeanization’ effect and the counter-revolutionary state trajectory that followed thereafter, obstructed transnational revolutionary collaboration and led to the fragmentation of previously coherent cultural spaces, as Konstantina Zanou has argued.¹¹² That was the case in Italy and Greece, whose mutual bonds of transnational political friendship, formed in the 1820s and 1830s, were damaged after 1848.¹¹³ As ‘intellectual bridges’, brought up in the early nineteenth century in a culturally mixed ‘Greco-Italian’ milieu, gradually passed away, the links between the two countries and cultural-linguistic spaces weakened.¹¹⁴ Although outbursts of romantic solidarity continued sporadically in the later nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, with *Garibaldini* volunteering in the Greek revolts and wars of 1866–69, 1897 and 1912–13, these remained rather isolated phenomena reflecting a bygone era.¹¹⁵ In this slow process of ‘estrangement’ between Greeks and Italians, the revolutionary exiles in Greece of 1830, and above all of 1848–49, acted instrumentally, representing both the culmination and the beginning of the end of this transnational political friendship.

112 Zanou, *Transnational Patriotism*, 207–14.

113 G. Pécout, ‘Philhellenism in Italy: political friendship and the Italian volunteers in the Mediterranean in the nineteenth century’, *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* 9/4 (2004) 405–27; idem, ‘Pour une lecture méditerranéenne et transnationale du Risorgimento’, *Revue d’histoire du XIXe siècle* 44 (2012) 29–47.

114 K. Zanou, ‘Διανοούμενοι-“Γέφυρες” στη μετάβαση από την προεθνική στην εθνική εποχή’, *Τα Ιστορικά* 58 (2013) 3–22.

115 L. Kallivretakis, ‘Οι Γαριβαλδίνοι στην Κρητική εξέγερση του 1866: το παιχνίδι των αριθμών’, *Τα Ιστορικά* 5 (1986) 121–38; A. Moutafidou, ‘Italian state politics and the disruptive factor of volunteer groups’, *Mediterranean Historical Review* 33/1 (2018) 27–44.

Lydia Tricha, *Χαρίλαος Τρικούπης. Ο πολιτικός του ‘Τις παίει;’ και του ‘Δυστυχώς επωχεύσαμεν’*, Athens: Polis, 2016. Pp. 626
DOI:[10.1017/byz.2019.5](https://doi.org/10.1017/byz.2019.5)

The history of nineteenth-century Greece is a topic much more rarely addressed than that of the twentieth century. Apart from a few notable exceptions like John Petropulos¹, Ioannis Koliopoulos², Gunnar Hering³ and Georges Dertilis⁴, few scholars have offered insightful contributions on the first century of the Greek state. Lydia Tricha's recent biography of Charilaos Trikoupis presents a welcome addition to this distinguished line of scholarship. Indeed, high-quality biographies are a rare commodity in Greek-speaking academia, as the author herself remarks (p. 17). This lacuna becomes particularly evident when it comes to Trikoupis, who is commonly recognized as the most charismatic nineteenth-century Greek statesman but, up to this point, has not been the object of a scholarly biography. Tricha has invested more than three decades into the study of her subject, and she was allowed access to previously unexploited archives, including Trikoupis' personal estate. This invaluable source is further supplemented by a wide range of Greek, British and French archival and published material, such as newspapers, parliamentary protocols and periodicals, and supported with abundant secondary literature. The author has used this impressive amount of sources to produce an authoritative account of Trikoupis' public and private life, which is likely to remain a key reference work for years to come.

The biography follows a rather conventional chronological structure and is written in a lucid style, which enables even the non-expert to grasp Trikoupis' background, formative stimuli, ambitions and limitations. Although Trikoupis is consistently at the core of the volume, it is in fact the comprehensive intermedia scattered across the book that provide the most fascinating information on broader issues surrounding the main protagonist. Therefore, the reader gets also informed about the early functioning and shortages of the 'Othonian' university of Athens, where Trikoupis began his legal studies (pp. 88–96); or on the peculiar voting system with a pellet (σφαίριδιο), valid between 1864 and 1915, which defined the result of many an election during Trikoupis' times (pp. 135–145). Here, Tricha can escape the mere narration of a great man's deeds. She is thus able to contextualize her subject appropriately by contrasting her findings with relevant scholars like Kostas Lappas⁵ and Nikos Alivizatos⁶ respectively. The author, however, does not always take full advantage of these opportunities and prefers to treat them solely as episodes in Trikoupis' development.

1 John Petropulos, *Politics and Statecraft in the Kingdom of Greece, 1833–1843* (Princeton 1968).

2 Ioannis Koliopoulos, *Brigands with a cause: Brigandage and Irredentism in Modern Greece, 1821–1912* (Oxford 1987).

3 Gunnar Hering, *Die politischen Parteien in Griechenland, 1821–1936*, 2 vols. (Munich 1992).

4 Georges Dertilis, *Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Κράτους, 1830–1920*, 2 vols. (Athens 2004).

5 Kostas Lappas, *Πανεπιστήμιο και φοιτητές στην Ελλάδα κατά τον 19ο αιώνα* (Athens 2004).

6 Nikos Alivizatos, *Το Σύνταγμα και οι εχθροί του στη Νεοελληνική ιστορία, 1800–2010* (Athens 2011).

As regards the beginnings of Trikoupis' career, one of the book's greatest achievements is that it permanently demolishes the oft-cited myth that sees in Trikoupis the rise of a bourgeois class in Greece. On the contrary, Tricha insists that Trikoupis was the most representative offspring of the Greek political oligarchy, being son and nephew of two former prime ministers, and, as such, best qualified for the highest governmental posts.

After examining the groundbreaking article 'Who's to blame?' (pp. 223–234) and the establishment of the no-confidence motion (pp. 250–254), Tricha turns to the modernizing ventures of the multiple Trikoupis cabinets after 1882 (pp. 317ff). Chapters 4 and 5, which focus on Trikoupis' premierships until 1895, are thus the most interesting and well-written of the book, resembling an introduction to the political and administrative history of the period, rather than just the story of one man. Banal though it may sound at first, it is the history of Trikoupean bureaucratic advancement—allegedly the most important state-building episode between Othon and Venizelos—that requires urgent revisiting. Successfully transcending dated political histories⁷ and agreeing with recent reappraisals on statecraft⁸, Tricha articulates a colorful picture of the internal dynamics of the expanding state apparatus. She accordingly provides a much-needed social history of the Greek state mechanism, a trajectory that will hopefully be replicated for subsequent eras of Greek history. Through administrative and military reorganization, reforms in public finance, and 1880s infrastructure projects, Tricha portrays Trikoupis' vision of a strengthened Greece capable of dealing with international challenges in the post-1878 Balkans, and the means he deployed to create it (pp. 325–364, 433–448). Yet, these ambitious efforts concluded with Trikoupis' last premiership (1892–1895). At this point, mounting economic problems led to the infamous 1893 bankruptcy, Trikoupis' retirement from politics, and his premature death in self-exile in 1896 (pp. 509–558).

Tricha eventually judges Trikoupis rather favorably, mostly because of his parliamentary, legislative and infrastructural legacy, and despite the ultimate failure (or inadequacy) of his military and economic policy (pp. 558–566). Judging from her overall attitude towards Trikoupis, her positive empathy with her subject becomes evident. This stance leads her to Manichean conclusions and a harsh condemnation of Trikoupis' main rival, Theodoros Diligiannis, even though certain scholars have already offered more balanced assertions about Diligiannis' political career.⁹

Finally, Tricha also deserves praise for unravelling the private individual behind the statesman, an essential ingredient for an aspiring holistic biography such as this. Therefore, the reader discovers the discreet yet highly influential role that Trikoupis' sister Sophia played in his political rise and victorious electoral campaigns (especially pp. 218–223), as well as his late romantic engagement with Maria von Trautenberg,

7 E.g. Katerina Gardikas, "Parties and Politics in Greece, 1875–1885: Towards a Two-Party System" Ph.D. diss. University of London, 1988.

8 Kostas Kostis, *Τα κακομαθημένα παιδιά της Ιστορίας. Η διαμόρφωση του νεοελληνικού κράτους, 18^{ος}–21^{ος} αιώνες* (Athens 2013).

9 Above all Niki Maroniti, *Πολιτική εξουσία και εθνικό ζήτημα στην Ελλάδα, 1880–1910* (Athens 2009).

wife of the Austrian ambassador in Athens (pp. 376–384). Such brief intervals to the main storyline serve both to humanize Trikoupis and to provide relief from the typically ‘heavy’ political narrative that dominates the text.

In conclusion, one cannot but recognize the well-researched and timely contribution of Lydia Tricha to modern Greek historiography. One hopes that a shorter version, at least, will be translated into English as well. That way, Trikoupis could be interpreted comparatively to the other great European statesmen of his time, like Disraeli and Gladstone in Britain, Bismarck in Germany, Bach and Taaffe in Austria, and Stambulov in Bulgaria.

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Angelos Dalachanis *The Greek Exodus from Egypt: Diaspora Politics and Emigration, 1937–1962*. New York/Oxford: Berghahn, 2017. Pp. 274.
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Angelos Dalachanis created quite a stir by starting the Greek edition of this book with the emphatic statement “Δεν είμαι Αιγυπτιώτης.” Although his disclosure loses some of its potency in translation, by declaring that he is *not* a Greek from Egypt, Dalachanis presumably intended to highlight his lack of bias and distance himself from Greek Egyptians who have published on the subject of their homeland. With this in mind, I should probably mention that my father was a Greek from Egypt and the exodus described in this book directly affected three generations of my family. When recounting their experiences, my Greek Egyptian relatives never referred to an expulsion, a commonly held misconception that Dalachanis and others are trying to correct. Their decision to leave Egypt was clearly a matter of personal choice. Still, their actual motives were often unclear and with the passage of time many of their stories gave rise to questions which remained unanswered. Until now.

Numerous studies of the Greeks in Egypt have focussed on the super-rich cotton barons of Alexandria and a handful of other wealthy industrialists and benefactors. Most Greek Egyptians know very well that their story does not begin and end in the salons of the Benakis and Kotsikas families. Dalachanis’ book helps combat this delusion by introducing a large cast of protagonists made up of influential but lesser-known community leaders, educators, journalists and ordinary run-of-the-mill Greek Egyptians. His analysis of unpublished diplomatic sources reveals that in the post-Montreux era, and especially after World War II, successive Greek governments feared that an influx of impoverished Greek Egyptians would upset the fragile political and socioeconomic status quo in Greece. In response, community leaders, politicians and diplomats tried to prevent such an occurrence from taking place by diverting the flow of migrants in other directions. This uncomfortable truth has not gone down well in some quarters, but the evidence produced by Dalachanis is conclusive. As this book

Moral lessons in late Byzantium: rhetorical models and didacticism in Joseph Bryennios' *Forty-Nine Chapters* (c. 1402)

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This article examines Joseph Bryennios' Forty-Nine Chapters, a text that has been hitherto explored mostly for the information on social practices in late Byzantium. The analysis of the text's rhetorical techniques indicates that Bryennios departed significantly from other contemporary collections of kephalaia which relied on the inherited wisdom of gnomologia. I argue that the pervasiveness of figurative language and vivid analogies in the Forty-Nine Chapters shaped his specific didacticism and unveiled the author's acquaintance with the technique of rhetorical amplification.

Keywords: Byzantine rhetoric; didactic literature; late Byzantium; Joseph Bryennios; kephalaia

Introduction

Few concepts have been as broadly used as that of *didactic literature*. Today, didactic literature includes a considerable number of texts intended to reach a targeted audience in a systematic way, often in the form of a handbook, an encyclopedia, or a reference book. It has also been acknowledged that there are multiple methods of teaching with the help of specialized texts which vary with specific periods of time, places, and purposes.¹ For its part, Byzantine literature offers an abundance of didactic texts, allowing us to explore how ideas and contents of teaching changed across centuries. It also offers the opportunity to explore the purposes and functions of various types of didactic writing because, along with the various technical handbooks inherited from antiquity and copied in Byzantium, many authors produced texts aimed at changing the conduct, the beliefs, or the worldview of their recipients.

One such author was Joseph Bryennios (c.1350-c.1422) whose personality has often been associated with intense preaching activities both in Constantinople as well as on the

1 For general aspects of pre-modern didactic literature, see P. Toohey, *Epic Lessons. An Introduction to Ancient Didactic Poetry* (New York 1996) 1–19.

islands of Crete and Cyprus.² Author of a large number of homilies and court orations, Bryennios acquired the fame of an inflexible moralist with a keen eye for moral decay and social justice during a period of accelerating political decline.³ Moreover, since he held the position of court preacher in Constantinople for a long period of time, scholars regarded his uncompromising views as being indicative of an approach typical of the late Byzantine ecclesiastical circles.⁴ Nevertheless, this image of a churchman with rigid doctrinal and political views holds certain limitations. His extant epistolary collection allows us a glimpse into his intellectual background which was not much different from that of other lay contemporary scholars. He owned a substantial book collection⁵ and had close connections with important scholars such as Demetrios Kydones, Maximos Chrysoberges, and Manuel Kalekas, the most prominent pro-Latin Byzantines of the time.⁶ He was also close to the Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos (r. 1391–1425), also an accomplished rhetorician, who appreciated Bryennios' rhetorical skills⁷ and who, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, appointed him as court preacher.⁸ From this position, he composed a great many texts among which we find homilies and several polemical orations on political issues or against the Church union.⁹

2 For a recent overview of Bryennios biography, bibliography, and oeuvre, see H. Bazini, 'Une première édition des œuvres de Joseph Bryennios: les Traités adressés aux Crétois', *Revue des études byzantines* 62 (2004) 83–7.

3 On Bryennios' views regarding the social and political conditions of early fifteenth-century Byzantium, see his oration *On the Rebuilding of the City Walls*, ed. Tomadakes, 'Δημηγορία περὶ τοῦ τῆς Πόλεως ἀνακτίσματος (1415 μ. Χ.)', *Ἐπετηρὶς Ἑταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν* 36 (1968) 1–15.

4 See G. Patacsi, *Un chapitre des relations gréco-latines au 14e siècle* (Rome 1968) and N. Necipoğlu, *Byzantium Between the Ottomans and the Latins* (Cambridge 2009) 187–9.

5 His testament lists nine manuscripts among which we find works by Aristotle, Ptolemy's *Geography*, grammar, music, and logic, ed. N. Tomadakes 'Ἐκ τῆς βυζαντινῆς ἐπιστολογραφίας. Ἰωσήφ μοναχοῦ τοῦ Βρυεννίου Ἐπιστολαὶ Α' καὶ πρὸς αὐτὸν Γ'', *Ἐπετηρὶς Ἑταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν* 46 (1983–6) 358–9. He was also acquainted with classical authors and often used them in his texts, as was the case with Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations*. See D. A. Rees, 'Joseph Bryennius and the text of Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations*', *Classical Quarterly* 50 (2000) 584–.

6 Joseph Bryennios, *Letters*, ed. N. Tomadakes (Athens 1983–6) 3 and 10. While Bryennios often debated matters of theological doctrine, the language of these letters suggests his close connections with his opponents.

7 In the first sixteen letters of his collection, Bryennios uses an intricate, classicizing style. Furthermore, he chose these letters as epistolary models for his students. See R. J. Loenertz, 'Pour la chronologie des œuvres de Joseph Bryennios', *Revue des études byzantines* 7 (1949) 13.

8 As his collection of homilies indicates, he preached intensively at the Constantinopolitan court and sometimes at important occasions such as the visits of Latin delegations. The trust which Bryennios enjoyed at Manuel II's court is demonstrated by the fact that the emperor appointed him as guardian of his testament in 1425. See Georgios Sphrantzes, *Memoirs*, ed. V. Grecu (Bucharest 1966) 112.

9 Bryennios' texts and biography have been studied mostly for the information concerned with the Church Union. Among these orations, there were several highly polemical ones such as those oriented against Church Union or the one on the rebuilding of the Constantinopolitan walls, see 'Ἰωσήφ Βρυεννίου Δημηγορία περὶ τοῦ τῆς Πόλεως ἀνακτίσματος', ed. N. Tomadakes, *Ἐπετηρὶς Ἑταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν* 36 (1968) 1–15.

Despite Bryennios' multitude of works of spiritual or moral instruction, his didactic texts remain largely unexplored. One of his compositions cast in the form of a collection of *kephalaia* and titled *Forty-Nine Chapters* (Κεφάλαια ἐπτάκις ἐπτά)¹⁰ is an early example of his moral didacticism.¹¹ Dating from the early fifteenth century, the *Forty-Nine Chapters* arose out of his pastoral activities in Crete, where he spent twenty years between 1382 and 1402.¹² The importance of the text within Bryennios' *oeuvre* can hardly be overestimated. H. Bazini correctly argued that the *Chapters* enjoyed a certain popularity as attested by its multiple manuscripts and that it represented 'l'oeuvre la plus typique de la prédication de Joseph Bryennios aux Crétois'.¹³ Indeed, the *Chapters* encapsulates the author's teaching on Christian cosmology coupled with a comprehensive set of pieces of practical advice for use in daily life. It was this latter feature that attracted the attention of historians, who pointed out that the *Chapters* contains unique evidence about widespread social practices in late Byzantium.¹⁴ Indeed, several passages offer a detailed picture of the Cretans' behavior and alleged wrongdoings such as irregularities in religious service, their frequent blasphemies, or immorality.¹⁵

It has also been noted that the *Forty-Nine Chapters* provides valuable information about the chronology of Bryennios' vast oeuvre. N. Tomadakes and N. Ioannides discussed the historical context of the text and concluded that the composition dates from the first years after Bryennios had been expelled from Crete (1402) on account of his criticism against the local monastic community.¹⁶ More recently, H. Bazini studied the complex manuscript transmission of the text and convincingly demonstrated that the *Forty Nine Chapters* belong to a so-called *Cretan Corpus* distinct from Bryennios' Constantinopolitan works which consisted mainly of his homilies and texts performed

10 Joseph Bryennios, *Κεφάλαια ἐπτάκις ἐπτά* (*The Forty-Nine Chapters*), ed. E. Boulgares, *Ἰωσήφ τοῦ Βρυεννίου τὰ παραλειπομένα* (Leipzig 1784) 48–126.

11 The text was preserved in four manuscripts: *Patmiacus* 440, *Vallie*. B. 128 (27), *Dujčev* 262, *Mosq.*, *syn* 310. For a description of the manuscripts, which also include other texts of Bryennios addressed to Cretans, see Bazini, 'Une première édition', 87–97.

12 On his mission in Crete, see especially N. Tomadakes, 'Ἰωσήφ Βρυέννιος', in *Σύλλαβος βυζαντινῶν μελετῶν καὶ κειμένων* (Athens 1961) 491–611, and N. Ioannides, *Ὁ Ἰωσήφ Βρυέννιος. Βίος-ἔργο-διδασκαλία*, PhD Dissertation, University of Athens, 1985.

13 Bazini, 'Une première édition', 96.

14 L. Oeconomus re-edited ch. 47, which provides information on the Cretans' practices, see 'L'état intellectuel et moral des Byzantins vers le milieu du XIV siècle d'après une page de Joseph Bryennios', in *Mélanges Charles Diehl* (Paris 1930) 225–33.

15 Bryennios, *Forty-Nine Chapters*, ch. 47.

16 These criticisms had apparently made some of the Cretan clerics complain to the Venetian authorities. See *Farewell Speech to the Cretans*, ed. E. Boulgares (Leipzig 1784) 36–47 and his *Consolation to the Cretans*, ed. Tomadakes, 'Ἰωσήφ Βρυέννιου ἀνέκδοτα ἔργα κρητικά', *Ἐπετηρὶς Ἑταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν* 19 (1949) 130–54.

at Manuel II's court (c. 1404-c. 1420).¹⁷ This *Corpus* (Συγγράμματα πρὸς τοὺς Κρήτας) included eleven additional texts (farewell speeches, polemical treatises, and festal homilies) and seventeen letters.¹⁸ It was preceded by a general introduction (προθεωρία) and was intended for the moral and spiritual edification of the author's former community.¹⁹ While Bryennios wrote most of the compositions making up this *Corpus* during his stay in Crete, the *Forty-Nine Chapters* were put together after he arrived in Constantinople in 1402. The autograph manuscript containing the entire collection of texts dates from 1406 when Bryennios collected all the texts connected to his Cretan experience and sent them to his friend Alexios Apokaukos, a painter residing in Crete.²⁰

Building upon the previous research into the author's biography and the textual history of the Cretan corpus, the present article will shift attention away from the contexts of production towards aspects of literary composition and rhetorical-didactic strategies. These insights and the exploration of Bryennios' rhetorical models will reveal the author's reinterpretation of the genre of *moralizing chapters* as well as his intention to connect with the Constantinopolitan court-based scholarly networks of his time. The study will be conducted in several steps: first, we will examine the text's compositional structure, which can be traced back to the tradition of Byzantine *chapter* literature; second, we will examine several typical examples of late Byzantine chapter collections which illustrate the use of key themes and rhetorical devices therein; third, we will observe Bryennios' didactic content, authorial stance, and strategies whereby he departs from his contemporary models; and finally, we will consider the functions of the *Forty-Nine Chapters* in the late Byzantine intellectual contexts.

The *Forty-Nine Chapters*: purpose, composition, models

In the preface of the *Cretan Corpus*, Bryennios alludes to the function and sources of the entire corpus, including the *Forty-Nine Chapters*. He modestly states that, at the request of his friends and familiars in Crete, he gathered several disparate notes that he used during the composition of his homilies and addresses which he delivered inside or outside the church:

ἐμοὶ πολλοὶ πολλάκις φίλοι τε καὶ οἰκεῖοι, ὡς μέγα τι καὶ ἐν τῶν χρησίμων ἡτήσαντο, ἃ διὰ γλώττης ἐν Ἐκκλησίᾳ, καὶ ταῖς κοιναῖς Διαλέξεσιν ἐνίοτε τοῖς ἅπασιν προυτιθέμην ἐπ' ὠφελείᾳ ταῦτα δὴ συγγραψάμενον χαρίσασθαι [...] βραχύτατόν τι μέρος τῶν λαληθέντων ἀποτεμῶν καὶ ὅσον ἢ μνήμη παρακατέσχευ, ἐνταῦθα συνέταξα.

17 Many of the texts written in Constantinople have been edited by E. Boulgares, *Ἰωσήφ τοῦ Βρυεννίου τὰ εὑρεθέντα*, I-II (Leipzig 1768).

18 Bazini, 'Une première édition', 127–9.

19 French translation by Bazini, 'Une première édition', 117–19.

20 Ibid., 127.

Often, many friends and familiars have asked me, as if it was something important and useful, to offer them in a written composition the speeches which I have delivered orally in the church or sometimes in ordinary conversations for the benefit of all. [...] Having selected a very small part of my words and inasmuch as my memory permitted, I organized (this material) here.²¹

Nevertheless, despite Bryennios' silence about the textual design of the composition, the *Forty-Nine Chapters* presents an elaborate architecture emerging from the author's rhetoric and underlying didactic intentions. Most chapters are gathered into thematic clusters and follow an order that eventually leads to the presentation of the highest virtue needed for spiritual perfection, mercy (ἐλεημοσύνη). Bryennios' themes bear the influence of Byzantine theological tradition as well as of the intense debates with the supporters of Latin scholasticism.²² The first section (chs. 1–12) discusses the means and steps of acquiring knowledge regarding the divine sphere: the initial appeal to the five senses, the use of the intellectual faculties, and the understanding of the divine word, the Scriptures. Then, in chapters 13–28, he proceeds to the representation of divine creation and explains how this is reflected in the physical world (κόσμος).²³ In the ensuing section (chs. 29–39), Bryennios offers a description of instances in human life and of its inherent spiritual character. Having set the stage of his main didactic matter, Bryennios turns to present the sins of the Cretan community (ch. 47) and eventually to their antidotes, several specific virtues.

This ordered structure echoes similar features present in the Byzantine literary tradition of moralizing texts divided into chapters and clustered around themes of ethics. As a matter of fact, the very title of the text 'Seven-times-seven chapters', that is *Forty-Nine Chapters*, suggests the author's intention to attach himself to the tradition of moralizing *kephalaia*. Frequently, such collections of moral chapters were divided into a fixed and symbolic number of small units: fifty, one hundred, one hundred and fifty, or two hundred, as in another collection attributed to Bryennios.²⁴ Moreover, given that Bryennios' chapters shared rhetorical strategies as well as theoretical premises with other similar compositions, it appears that he was well aware of other compositions based upon *kephalaia*. In order to ascertain his dependence on, or departure from, his literary models, we need to have a preliminary look at this genre that earned great popularity in late Byzantium.

21 Bryennios, *Forty-Nine Chapters*, 48. The editor also signals the passages which quote verbatim Bryennios' previous homilies (e.g. ch. 49).

22 In particular, the centrality of mercy and the idea of an ordered, harmonious universe feature largely in contemporary scholastic texts. See P. Athanasopoulos, 'Georgios Gennadios Scholarios' *On the difference of venial and mortal sins* and its Thomistic background', *Revue des études byzantines* 76 (2018) 167–203.

23 This section seems to be heavily influenced by the scholastic ideas of an ordered, harmonious universe.

24 On the symbolism of rounded numbers of *kephalaia*, see P. Van Deun, 'Exploration du genre byzantine des *kephalaia*', in A. Rigo (ed.), *The Minor Genres of Byzantine Theological Literature* (Leiden 2013) 51.

The texts of *chapters* have often been regarded as being variations of the *Question and Answers* (*erotapokriseis*) literature with which they shared the didactic intention and the division into brief sections.²⁵ The Byzantines produced a variety of *kephalaia* which drew upon a multitude of sources: collections of proverbs or wise sayings, homilies, catenae, philosophical treatises, etc. Nevertheless, unlike the *erotapokriseis*, the *kephalaia* were not just repositories of information quoted *verbatim* from other sources and transmitted in a structured form. Despite their appearance of collections of disparate fragments that were loosely connected, most works of *kephalaia* maintained an underlying unity.²⁶ Joseph Rhakendytes, a fourteenth-century author of a synopsis of Byzantine learning in chapter form, argued that by reordering ideas from predecessors and putting them into new contexts, he produced a completely new work.²⁷ Rhakendytes also noted that it was not the originality of content that mattered but instead the completeness and coherence of the message that ultimately generated an understanding of the divine creation.²⁸

The difficulties of assessing the various Byzantine collections of chapters have been discussed by E. Kiapidou, who in a recent study argued that the term *kephalaia* had multiple uses and did not always refer to a collection of passages on a certain theme.²⁹ With respect to moralizing *kephalaia*, in recent years, research on individual collections of chapters focused upon two major issues: their sources and their transmission or further imitation.³⁰ The results of these investigations are particularly useful for placing the texts within their literary and intellectual context. Nevertheless, if scholars such as Charlotte Roueché pointed out the differences of approach in various collections of chapters, little has been done with regard to their rhetorical strategies of moralization and advice.³¹

25 The similarities have been noticed by S. Efthymiades, 'Questions and answers', in A. Kaldellis (ed.), *Cambridge Intellectual History of Byzantium* (Cambridge 2017) 47–62 and I. Papadopynnakis, 'Instruction by question and answer: The case of Late Antique and Byzantine *erotapokriseis*', in S. Johnson (ed.), *Greek Literature in Late Antiquity: Dynamism, Didacticism, Classicism* (London 2006) 91–106.

26 On the unity of content displayed in *kephalaia*, see P. Van Deun, 'Exploration du genre Byzantin des *Kephalaia*', 64–65. D. Searby suggests that many chapter collections had a logical order of their own, despite several interpolated chapters, 'Byzantine "encyclopedism", sacro-profane florilegia and the life of Saint Cyril Philoteos', in D. Serby (ed.), *Dōron rodopoikilon: Studies in Honour of Jan Olof Rosenqvist* (Uppsala 2011) 201.

27 Joseph Rhakendytes, *Epitome*, ed. M. Treu, 'Der Philosoph Joseph', *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 8 (1899) 37.

28 Cf. E. Gielen, 'Ad maiorem Dei gloriam: Joseph Rhakendytes' synopsis of Byzantine learning', in G. Woolf (ed.), *Encyclopaedism from Antiquity to the Renaissance* (Cambridge 2013) 271.

29 E. Kiapidou, 'Chapters, epistolary essays, and epistles. The case of Michael Glykas' collection of ninety-five texts', *Parekbolai* 3 (2013) 45–64.

30 It is the case with the studies on *florilegia* and the encyclopedic trends. See Searby, 'Byzantine "encyclopedism"', 199–203.

31 Few scholars approached the rhetoricity of advisory books: Ch. Roueché, 'The rhetoric of Kekaumenos', in E. Jeffreys (ed.), *Rhetoric in Byzantium* (Aldershot 2003) 25. See also Van Deun, 'Exploration du genre

The late Byzantine period, with its numerous examples of *kephalaia*, is particularly relevant for discussing various developments within the genre. One popular type of late Byzantine collection of *kephalaia* emerged from the ecclesiastical circles and sought to clarify theological topics that sparked polemical debates. In this category, we can include texts such as Gregory Palamas' *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters* (c. 1350) which was rather meant to be a theological treatise and to a lesser extent as a book of moral advice.³² Closely related to this type of *kephalaia* were the so-called beneficial chapters (κεφάλαια ὠφέλιμα) addressed to monastic audiences, a type of writing introduced in the fourth century by Evagrius Ponticus.³³ One of the most popular examples of such a composition in the fourteenth century was Gregory of Sinai's *Very Beneficial Chapters* (c. 1340),³⁴ which provided moral advice to those who adopted Hesychasm.³⁵

Another major type of *kephalaia* popular in the Palaiologan period had a political-practical subject matter, as illustrated by the texts penned in the early fifteenth-century by Manuel II Palaiologos and Demetrios Chrysoloras. The former authored a text of *Hypothekai* (*Foundations*) in one hundred chapters addressed to his son and future emperor, John VIII;³⁶ the latter wrote a collection of one hundred 'letters', which were in fact chapters that drew upon his previous encomiastic works.³⁷ The focus of both authors, who followed the old model of Agapetus' sixth-century

byzantine des *kephalaia*', 30 and F. Leonte, *Rhetoric in Purple. The Renewal of Byzantine Imperial Ideology in the Texts of Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos* (Budapest 2012) 158–67.

32 Palamas extensively treated issues of natural science, divine economy, and energy, Gregory Palamas, *The One Hundred and Fifty Chapters*, ed. R. Sinkiewicz (Toronto 1988) 1–34. Cf. also the early fifteenth century collection of chapters titled *On the Procession of the Holy Spirit* by Manuel Palaiologos (c. 1402). See Ch. Dendrinou, *An Annotated Critical Edition (Editio Princeps) of Emperor Manuel II Palaeologus' Treatise on the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, Doctoral thesis, (London 1996) xx–xl. On the late Byzantine chapters resembling *Questions and Answers*, especially those by Symeon of Thessalonike, Markos Eugenikos, John Argyropoulos, and Gennadios Scholarios, see Efthymiades, 'Questions and answers', 60–2.

33 See P. Géhin, 'Les collections de kephalaia monastiques: Naissance et succès d'un genre entre création originale, plagiat et florilège', in A. Rigo (ed.), *Theologica Minora. The Minor Genres of Byzantine Theological Literature*, 1–50; E. Ivánka, 'Κεφάλαια. Eine byzantinische literaturform und ihre antiken Wurzeln', *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 47 (1954) 285–91; Kiapidou, 'Chapters, epistolary essays and epistles', 45–62.

34 Gregory of Sinai, *Very Beneficial Chapters*, ed. J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, 150 1240–1345. Similar collections were penned by the Xanthopouloi brothers (Kallistos and Ignatios) who composed a text known as *Centuria* (c. 1390) and by the Patriarch Kallistos I in the mid-fourteenth century. See A. Rigo, 'Callisto i patriarcha. I 100 (109) capitoli sulla purezza dell'anima. Introduzione, edizione e traduzione', *Byzantion* 80 (2010) 333–407.

35 See K. Ware, *A Fourteenth-Century Manual of Hesychast Prayer: The Century of St Kallistos and St Ignatios Xanthopoulos* (Ottawa 1995).

36 Manuel Palaiologos, *Foundations of an Imperial Education* (Ὑποθήκαι βασιλικῆς παιδείας), ed. J. P. Migne, 156, *Patrologia Graeca*, 313–84.

37 Demetrios Chrysoloras, *One Hundred Letters Addressed to Emperor Manuel Palaiologos*, ed. Conti-Bizzaro, (Turin 1985).

Advice for Emperor Justinian divided into seventy-two chapters, was on the rulers' activity and profile.³⁸

Although these compositions were written for different audiences (monastic or court-based), their focus remained upon the acquisition of virtues. As in many other didactic texts,³⁹ the four cardinal virtues (wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice) feature prominently, not only in the political chapters but also in the monastic ones.⁴⁰ In all texts, the authors present a systematic and hierarchic view of virtues, be they spiritual, practical, or political.⁴¹ Virtues are thus presented as stages in a complex spiritual or intellectual formation. For instance, in his *Very Beneficial Chapters*, Gregory of Sinai first presents the origin of virtues, then proceeds through a *ladder* (κλίμαξ) of virtues,⁴² and eventually explores the virtues necessary as a preliminary step in one's spiritual journey to *hesychia*, tranquility.⁴³ For Manuel II, virtues (e.g. generosity, sincerity, military skills, and obedience to the Church) were also meant as stages in the formation of the ruler and, more generally, of the ἀγαθὸς ἀνὴρ (the ideal individual).⁴⁴ Finally, Demetrios Chrysoloras' chapters developed a system of imperial virtues, in the centre of which he placed the ideas of imperial generosity, trust, and benevolence.⁴⁵

As these authors also try to identify the implications of virtues, they approach several connected themes such as, in Gregory's case, true knowledge, the parts of the soul, as well as the misleading force of sins or vices. For their part, Manuel Palaiologos and Chrysoloras are concerned with political processes taking place at court and draw heavily upon ethical concepts such as choice, the responsibility of action, or voluntariness. These general ethical concerns eventually allowed the authors to

38 P. Bell, *Three Political Voices from the Age of Justinian. Agapetus, Advice to the Emperor, Dialogue on Political Science, Paul the Silentary, Description of Hagia Sophia* (Liverpool 2009) 27–48 and 99–122.

Similar concerns with practicing virtues at court surface in other late Byzantine collections of chapters as well: John Chortasmenos' *Moral Commandments* (Ἠθικὰ παραγγέλματα, c. 1400) divided into several passages and in Matthew Gabalas' *Kephalaia* (c. 1351). Since they instead addressed ordinary courtiers and not rulers, the spiritual and practical advice proposed a different set of virtues tailored for broader use. On how collections of chapters were adapted to various audiences, see A. Angelou, 'Matthaios Gabalas and his Kephalaia', in A. Moffat (ed.), *Maistor. Classical, Byzantine, and Renaissance Studies for Robert Browning* (Leiden 2017) 259–68.

39 For a discussion of cardinal virtues in both the West and East, see I. Bejczy, *The Cardinal Virtues in the Middle Ages. A Study in Moral Thought from the Fourth to the Fourteenth Century* (Leiden 2011).

40 Gregory of Sinai, *Chapters*, ch. 87, Manuel Palaiologos, *Foundations*, ch. 89, and Demetrios Chrysoloras, *One Hundred Letters*, ch. 6.

41 E.g. Gregory of Sinai, *Chapters*, ch. 88 distinguishes between practical, physical and spiritual virtues. Manuel Palaiologos and Demetrios Chrysoloras draw upon the distinction between intellectual and physical-military virtues.

42 Gregory of Sinai, *Chapters*, ch. 120.

43 Gregory of Sinai, *Chapters*, chs. 83 and 99, where he argues that hesychasts have to first acquire virtue.

44 Manuel Palaiologos, *Foundations*, ch. 1.

45 Demetrios Chrysoloras, *One Hundred Letters*, chs. 9, 13, and 35.

integrate virtues into broad theoretical systems: the hesychastic doctrine (Gregory of Sinai), the Aristotelian idea of a good life centred upon virtue in political life (Manuel Palaiologos); and the imperial ideology with its long-held tenets of omnipotence (Demetrios Chrysoloras).

In addition to the common concern for virtues and ethics, such texts shared formal features of expression typical to the genre of *moralizing chapters*. First and foremost, all authors made use of direct address through imperatives and vocatives. Gregory draws the attention of his readers who wish to attain *hesychia* by employing frequent imperative forms such as ἰδοὺ or νόμισον.⁴⁶ Likewise, Manuel constantly uses imperatives when he urges his son to learn from others, to practice virtue, or to show respect, while Demetrios Chrysoloras uses a standard manner of address with a form of vocative and sometimes an imperative in the opening of his chapters.⁴⁷

Another rhetorical feature common to these late Byzantine collections of moralizing chapters is the heavy use of pithy sayings that originated in the numerous late Byzantine gnomologies. Strikingly, a considerable number of Gregory's chapters are reduced to just one or two maxims.⁴⁸ Similarly, Demetrios Chrysoloras embeds multiple gnomic sayings in most of the chapters, as for instance when he gives famous quotations from the Platonic dialogues.⁴⁹ Manuel Palaiologos also makes use of gnomic sayings on a large scale but his approach is slightly different as he further briefly explains the gnomes and adds personal reflections.⁵⁰ Notably, in all three texts, most maxims consist of analogies (metaphors and similes) intended to illustrate key theoretical themes. Gregory of Sinai's *Chapters* includes similes which emphasize the pre-eminence of the spiritual over the sensorial: e.g. between one's sense of visual perception (ὀφθαλμός) and the mind (νοῦς) whose role is to grasp the divine.⁵¹ On the other hand, for Manuel and Chrysoloras, visual representations form a pretext for brief moral reflections: e.g. the analogy between the rust corroding iron and the hatred that affects one's soul.⁵²

This concise presentation of contemporary cases of collections of chapters allows us to draw two preliminary conclusions before moving on to analyzing Bryennios' text in terms of its didactic content and techniques. Firstly, these collections depended heavily upon previous gnomic sources with the result that often the advice appears to be general rather than specific. Secondly, in terms of the construction of the didactic stance, the authors of late Byzantine didactic *kephalaia* fashioned their personal profile as authorities in ethical, political, or spiritual matters. Furthermore, these texts were

46 Gregory of Sinai, *Chapters*, chs. 3, 24 and 131.

47 E.g. on not committing an injustice, Manuel Palaiologos, *Foundations*, ch. 26 (νόμιζε) and on imperfection (ἐνθυμοῦ). Demetrios Chrysoloras begins and ends each of his chapters with the formulas of direct address (ἄριστε βασιλεῦ and χαίροις).

48 Gregory of Sinai, *Chapters*, chs. 3–9.

49 E.g. in ch. 40 where Chrysoloras argues in favor of rulers trusting everyone.

50 E.g. Manuel Palaiologos, *Foundations*, ch. 23 which compares the rust on iron with treachery.

51 Gregory of Sinai, *Chapters*, ch. 23.

52 Manuel Palaiologos, *Foundations*, ch. 23.

conceived as introductory sections of extensive didactic projects with spiritual and political aims. Gregory's *beneficial* chapters precede two other collections of chapters in which he details theological aspects of the hesychastic doctrine. Manuel Palaiologos intended his chapters of *Foundations* to be a preliminary text of his much more extensive *Seven Ethical-Political Orations*, also dedicated to his son, John VIII.⁵³ Likewise, Demetrios Chrysoloras connected his epistolary *Kephalaia* with a panegyric addressed to the emperor.⁵⁴

In its turn, Bryennios' *Forty-Nine Chapters* echoed several concerns and techniques present in these contemporary *kephalaia*. However, he also carried out significant changes which will be discussed in the following sections.

The didactic content of the *Forty-Nine Chapters*: virtues and sins

Firstly, several similarities with other *kephalaia* surface in Bryennios' didactic treatment of virtues. Just as in the above-mentioned texts of moral or spiritual advice, the focus upon virtues in the *Forty-Nine Chapters* falls within a broad perspective on human nature and is informed by both spiritual and practical factors.⁵⁵ Besides, like other books of moralizing chapters, *The Forty-Nine Chapters* provides a systematic view of interconnected virtues. Among the essential virtues, Bryennios lists self-knowledge, consideration towards others, prudence, humility, silence, obeisance to divine commandments, sacrifice, purity, meekness, and finally, charity.⁵⁶ As recently indicated, Bryennios' focus upon these virtues might have to do with the influence of Thomas Aquinas in late Byzantium.⁵⁷

In terms of the origin of virtues, the text identifies personal agency and responsibility (for example, in Manuel Palaiologos or Chrysoloras) as well as one's effort to draw closer to divine perfection (for example, in Gregory Palamas and Gregory of Sinai).⁵⁸ It also provides practical advice on how to effectively follow a path to salvation which involved the eradication of many types of sins. This was a pervasive theme in his text, first emerging in ch. 32, which includes a detailed description of the underworld (Hades) and of the inhabited earth (κόσμος, οἰκουμένη) where wrongful actions

53 Manuel Palaiologos, *Prefatory Letter*, ed. J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca* 156, 313–20. And Leonte, *Rhetoric in Purple*, 193.

54 Demetrios Chrysoloras, *Comparison Between the Rulers of the Past and the Emperor of Today*, ed. S. Lampros, III (Athens 1926) 222–45.

55 Cf. the first three chapters in Manuel's *Foundations*.

56 Bryennios, *Forty-Nine Chapters*, ch. 4.

57 See A. Argyriou, *Macaire Makrès et la polémique contre l'Islam* (Vatican 1986) 86–92 and J. Demetracopoulos, 'Scholarios' *On Almsgiving, or How to Convert a Scholastic Quaestio into a Sermon*, in D. Searby (ed.), 'Never the Twain Shall Meet'? *Latins and Greeks Learning from Each Other in Byzantium* (Berlin 2018) 129–77.

58 As in other chapters of advice which closely followed Aristotle's *Eudemian* and *Nicomachean Ethics* (e.g. Manuel Palaiologos, *Foundations*).

unfolded. The unambiguous condemnation of wrongful behavior emerges in ch. 47 (Τίνες αἰτίαι τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς λυπηρῶν), where Bryennios lists the sins of the Cretans: that many people do not even know how to do the sign of the cross, that priests are appointed for money, that monks and nuns live together, that people use names for their enemies, that people speak against God when it does not rain, etc. Notably, the presentation of these sins holds a striking level of concrete detail which provides Bryennios with the opportunity to throw light on the daily life of the late Byzantine population in Crete, especially the customs and the practices connected with life in monastic communities.

The open castigation addressed to the Cretans in the last chapters of the treatise also prompts the author to introduce a detailed account of spiritual virtues among which he regards charity, ἐλεημοσύνη, to be the most necessary one (ἀναγκαιοτέρα τῶν ἀρετῶν).⁵⁹ The emphasis on charity echoes the divine attribute mentioned in ch. 2 where Bryennios praised God for not punishing the sinners.⁶⁰ Doubtless, this choice of the highest virtue did not occur by chance because *charity* mirrored his own situation after he had been expelled from Crete on grounds that he considered unfair.⁶¹ The central role of ἐλεημοσύνη in his ethical system is indicated by the fact that Bryennios dedicates the whole last chapter to this topic as a closure of the *Forty-Nine Chapters*. Therein, he provides a lengthy discussion upon this particular virtue in which he compares the individuals who cultivate charity with tradesmen or farmers, on the one hand, and with God, on the other hand.⁶² This elaborate comparison is telling for the author's distinct approach to virtues: unlike his predecessors who mostly drew upon generic virtues and limited themselves to restating old maxims, Bryennios takes a different path and provides extensive commentaries of the moral situations which he addresses. True to this stylistic commitment, his perspective on virtues has a strong sense of visual order, as revealed in ch. 14 where he compares individuals with trees producing fruits. Just as trees bear fruits, Bryennios says, in the same way, people bear virtues as their 'fruits'. The analogy also reflects a significant shift from the contemporary views that regarded the system of virtues in abstract terms informed by ancient theories of ethics and most often in a strict hierarchy.⁶³

59 Bryennios, *Forty-Nine Chapters*, ch. 49.

60 Bryennios, *Forty-Nine Chapters*, ch. 2: ὁ δὲ Βασιλεὺς τῆς δόξης, διὰ τὴν ἄκραν αὐτοῦ ἀγαθότητα, τὴν μὲν ἁμαρτίαν τὴν ἐς αὐτὸν ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἀδάμ γεγεννημένην ἐξαφανίσαι ἠθέλησε διὰ τοῦ θανάτου· αὐτὸν δὲ τὸν ἁμαρτήσαντα, ἢ τὴν αὐτοῦ κτῆσιν, τὸν κόσμον τοῦτον, οὐδαμῶς.

61 See above.

62 Bryennios, *Forty-Nine Chapters*, ch. 49: Μιμήθητι ἐν τούτῳ χρυσοχόους, Ἐμπόρους, καὶ Γεωργοὺς. Οἱ ἐν τῷ δαπανᾷ καὶ σκορπίζειν καινουργοῦσι τὰ ἐαυτῶν θαυμαστικῶς [...] Διὸ καὶ ὁ Κύριος οὐ μόνον εἰς πεινῶντας, ἀλλὰ καὶ εἰς διψῶντας καὶ ξένους καὶ γυμνοὺς καὶ ἀρρώστους καὶ τοὺς ἐν φυλακαῖς τὴν ἐλεημοσύνην ἡμῶν ἐκτείνεσθαι ἐνετείλατο.

63 In addition to the four cardinal virtues, several authors underlined the role of generosity and clemency. On the hierarchy of virtues in the medieval literature, see also Bejczy, *The Cardinal Virtues in the Middle Ages*, 276.

Bryennios' treatment of sins and virtues with the help of numerous concrete details and observations of the natural environment indicates the centrality of visual representations within his moral teachings. In the ensuing section, we will look more closely into how he shaped his teachings, in other words, how his rhetorical strategies impacted upon his didacticism and further set him apart among other contemporary authors of *kephalaia*.

Didactic techniques in the *Forty-Nine Chapters*: rhetorical analogies and figurative language

As scholars have long argued, the didacticism of a text can be detected at three levels: the presence of a didactic intention reflected in programmatic statements; the construction of didactic authority; and the textual design geared towards pedagogical purposes.⁶⁴ Certainly, numerous Byzantine texts sought to teach or to convey information, but few achieved such aims in a structured manner and with an open pedagogical intention.⁶⁵ By contrast, in Bryennios' *chapters*, we can detect all the prerequisites of a didactic text. Thus, in terms of didactic intention, in the general preface (προθεωρία) of the Cretan treatises which included the *Forty-Nine Chapters*, the author underlines the beneficial character of the texts.⁶⁶ The same preface mentions the Cretans' request for a word of moral advice after Bryennios returned to Constantinople in 1402.⁶⁷ Despite the initial remarks couched in the language of rhetorical modesty, Bryennios never asserts his personal didactic role but instead attributes the function of the teacher (διδάσκαλος) to other elements. In ch. 4, he lists the many ways whereby knowledge can be imparted: the scriptures, the consciousness, the created world (κόσμος), the commandments, the written commentaries about the Scriptures, and even ourselves.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, among these, Bryennios singles out the κόσμος, the created world (κτίσις τῶν ὀρωμένων), as being the element which can transmit the highest type of teaching about the divine harmonious design, that is to say, how all natural elements work together:

τὸν δὲ κόσμον, ἥτοι τὴν κτίσιν τὴν ὀρωμένην, διδάσκαλον ἀγάπης ἡμῖν παρεστήσατο. ἰδοὺ γὰρ ὅλος ὁ Οὐρανὸς ὅλη τῇ γῇ, τῷ πυρί, τῷ ἀέρι, τῷ ὕδατι καὶ τοῖς πᾶσι τὰ πάντα, φιλίῳ καὶ προσηνῶς συναρμολογεῖται.

64 J. Feros Ruys, *What Nature Does Not Teach. Didactic Literature in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods* (Turnhout 2008) 1–40.

65 F. Leonte, 'Didacticism in Byzantine epistolography', in A. Riehle (ed.), *A Companion to Byzantine Epistolography* (Leiden 2019, forthcoming).

66 Joseph Bryennios, *Preface (Προθεωρία τοῦ συγγράμματος)*, ed. E. Boulgares, *Τὰ παραλειπομένα* (Leipzig 1784) 48: Ἀλλὰ προσεκτέον τοῖς λεγομένοις, ἵνα μὴ καὶ αὐτὸς ἀνωφελῇ τὸν ὑπὲρ τῶνδε πόνον ὑπομείνω, καὶ ὑμεῖς διὰ ῥαθυμίαν λήθῃ παραδῶτε τὰ εἰρημένα.

67 Ibid.: ἐμοὶ πολλοὶ πολλάκις φίλοι τε καὶ οἰκεῖοι, ὥς μέγα τι καὶ ἐν τῶν χρησίμων ἠτήσαντο.

68 Bryennios, *Forty-Nine Chapters*, ch. 4: Βιβλία εἰς μάθησιν τῶν πραγμάτων, καὶ γνῶσιν τὴν αὐτοῦ, ταῦτα προὔθηκεν ἡμῖν ὁ Θεός· τὴν Συνείδησιν, τὸν Κόσμον, τὰς διὰ λόγου Ἐντολάς, τὰς διὰ γραμμάτων εἰσηγήσεις, τὰς τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἐπαγγελίας, ἡμᾶς αὐτοὺς καὶ ἑαυτὸν τὸ παράδοξον.

(God) gave us the world, that is to say, the visible creation, as a teacher of love. See how the entire Heaven is fitted together with the entire earth, the fire, the air, the water and with everything else in a friendly and gentle manner.⁶⁹

The insistence upon the teaching function of *κόσμος* contrasts with the attitude of other contemporary authors of didactic-moralizing chapters. As indicated, in many cases, writers openly assumed a personal *didascalical* stance, as in the already mentioned cases of Manuel II Palaiologos, Demetrios Chrysoloras,⁷⁰ or Gregory Palamas.⁷¹ Interestingly, Palamas, followed by Gregory of Sinai, had a completely different view when he stated that one can learn ‘something free of deceit and certain about God *only* from the teaching of spirit (ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος διδασκαλίας)’.⁷²

It is likely that Bryennios’ construction of *κόσμος* as being the key teaching agent in the *Forty-Nine Chapters* did not occur by accident. On the one hand, *κόσμος* held an epistemic function in other philosophical and theological texts, although without the centrality intended by Bryennios. On the other hand, Bryennios appears to be acquainted with other contemporary theoretical approaches as well, because, by late Byzantium, the concept of *κόσμος* came to signify a complex conceptual nexus, especially in connection with religious iconography. In Byzantine artistic theory and practice, *κόσμος* was used with the meaning of order and ornament which, as I. Drpić argued, ‘enhanced the representation of images, organized their appearance, and communicated sanctity’.⁷³ Drpić also convincingly suggested that in late Byzantium, *κόσμος*, as the adornment of sacred objects, was used abundantly because it responded to aesthetic norms as well as to the pervasive understanding that *κόσμος* could partake of the object’s sanctity.⁷⁴ While Bryennios uses *κόσμος* with the parallel meaning of the *created world*, he also integrates the notion of an orderly ornamentation. On several occasions, he emphasizes the idea that the *κόσμος* holds an intricate order and moreover generates sensorial pleasure. He describes the universe in terms of a well-structured creation, with the heaven embracing the earth, and each level holding a specific function.⁷⁵

The idea of an ordered and pleasurable creation receives further elaboration in his rhetorical approach. On several occasions, Bryennios mentions *sapheneia* (clarity) and

69 Ibid.

70 On the didascalical stance and the sources of didactic advice in their collections of chapters, see Leonte, *Rhetoric in Purple*, 140–91.

71 In the case of theological chapters, scriptural passages, patristics, as well as doctrinal theological principles, offered a solid foundation to the didactic material. See Sinkewicz, *Gregory Palamas. One Hundred and Fifty Chapters*, 16–24.

72 Palamas, *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters*, 102.

73 I. Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion in Later Byzantium* (Cambridge 2016) 167.

74 Ibid.

75 E.g. Bryennios, *Forty-Nine Chapters*, ch. 1 (Περὶ αἰσθητῶν ἡδυτέρων), ch. 22 (Ὅτι φυσικῶς πάντων τῶν ἐν τῷ Κόσμῳ μετέχουσα), and ch. 24 (Περὶ τοῦ σταυρικοῦ τύπου).

enargeia (vividness) as being the means of providing effective moral lessons.⁷⁶ For instance, in chapter four, he addresses the issue of proper and plain expression and compares ill or incomplete bodies with ineffective speeches:

Ὡς γὰρ ἐπὶ σώματος, ἐνὸς μέρους ἔλλειψις, ἢ ἀσθένεια λυμαίνεται τῷ παντὶ, καὶ οὐ τὸ μέρος μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ὅλον ὑβρίζεται τῷ τοῦ ἐλαττώματι. Οὕτω καὶ ἐπὶ λόγου παντός συμβαίνει ἴδιοι τις ἂν τῇ τῆς μιᾶς λέξεως, ἢ ἐνοίας, ἀκαίρῳ προθέσει, ἢ ἀφερέσει τὸν πάντα περιφρονούμενον. Οὐ γὰρ δεῖ τοῖς καλοῖς τὰ ἀκαλλῆ μίγνυσθαι, οὔτε ταῖς ὕβρεσι τοὺς ἐπαίνους ἐνοῦσθαι, οὐδὲ τοῖς σπουδαίοις συναναφύρεσθαι τὰ γέλοια.

In the case of a body, the absence of a limb and the weakness affect the entire body and not just a limb but the whole is altered by the loss. In the same way, in the case of any kind of speech or text, one could see if by inappropriately adding or removing a word or an idea the entire composition was disdained. For one must not mix the beautiful and unpleasant words, nor put together insults and praises, nor knead together serious matters with jokes.

Connected to these rhetorical choices, in terms of didactic design, the author employs a strategy of teaching virtues underpinned by the heavy use of figurative language and rhetorical analogies (mostly metaphors and similes). In his monograph on Bryennios, Tomadakes already noted that Bryennios' style featured a variety of means of expression (ποικιλία) and numerous vivid images which contributed to the author's effective communication.⁷⁷ Indeed, albeit conventional, analogies appear in most of the chapters, a situation which contrasts with the large scale use of abstract philosophical or theological reflection present in similar collections of moralizing chapters. These analogies often extend over entire chapters.⁷⁸ Recent theoretical research on figurative language yielded several observations which are relevant to the present discussion as well. Firstly, analogies are not merely ornamental but they often carry further meanings determined by their frequency. In the words of G. Lakoff, 'if one tries to paraphrase a metaphor, what is lost is more than just a certain effect. What is lost is part of the meaning itself, the insight which the metaphor alone can give'.⁷⁹ Secondly, as Keysar and Glucksberg correctly argued, 'the unique function of metaphors does not lie in the novelty of the information conveyed, but in the way that it is conveyed'.⁸⁰ Taking these assumptions as a starting point, I will try next to answer the question as to why Bryennios turns to vivid imagery and figurative language when putting forth moral commandments in the *Forty-Nine Chapters*.

76 E.g. in the προθεωρία and in ch. 26.

77 Tomadakes, 'Ἰωσήφ Βρυέννιος', 589.

78 E.g. ch. 10 ('Ὅτι πολλὰ τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἡ Ἐκκλησία πέφυκεν).

79 On analogies and their workings, see G. Lakoff, *More Than Cool Reason. A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor* (Chicago and London 1989) 12.

80 G. Keysar, 'Metaphor and communication', *Poetics Today* 13 (1992) 638.

First, we need to look at the content and distribution of the analogies which Bryennios used. Doubtless, most of Bryennios' analogies can be found at work across a variety of other texts, including homiletic literature and epideictic rhetoric. Nevertheless, he takes a step further and firmly grounds the use of analogies in the area of sensorial perception. From the outset, in the first chapter, he emphasizes the importance of senses for understanding divine essence and God's attributes. All five senses, seeing, touching, smelling, tasting, and hearing, Bryennios states, account for the marvelous beauty of divine creation, the *κόσμος*.⁸¹ Following an ancient gnoseological scheme,⁸² he indicates that sensorial perception also constituted a preliminary step in understanding how the created world reflected the divine realm. Furthermore, the importance of senses is reflected in the persistent references to natural elements as, for instance, in ch. 12 where he stresses that the contemplation of all natural elements (the sky, the sun, the earth, plants, and animals) reveals God's charity.⁸³

Notably, this positive view about sensorial perception contrasted with the perspective of the contemporary theologians who authored collections of *κεφάλαια*. In his *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters*, Gregory Palamas associated evil passions with the pleasures derived from senses.⁸⁴ Following Palamas, in his *Beneficial Chapters*, Gregory of Sinai further emphasized the misleading role of *phantasia*, the image-calling faculty derived from sensorial perception.⁸⁵ He states that sin enters one's soul through the two initial levels of knowledge acquisition: senses and *phantasia*.⁸⁶ Subsequently, he asserts that knowledge about the divine comes from contemplation and constant prayer.⁸⁷ On the contrary, by asserting the importance of senses and *phantasia*, Bryennios instead seems to echo the approach to be found in fictional texts or in the late Byzantine court rhetoric which underlined the importance of perception in the gnoseological scheme.⁸⁸ For instance, like Bryennios, in an extensive panegyric for John VIII, Isidore of Kiev privileged the vividness of

81 Bryennios, *Forty-Nine Chapters*, ch. 1: ὡς ἡδύτερον τοῖς μὲν ὀμμασι φῶς, τοῖς δ' ὤσιν ἀληθεια, τῇ δὲ ῥινὶ μῦρον, τῇ δὲ γλώττῃ μέλι, τῇ δ' ἀφῇ μέταξιν· οὕτω τῷ μὲν νοὶ Θεός, τῇ δὲ διανοίᾳ Ἄγγελος [...]. Ὡς γὰρ ἐκεῖνα τὰς ἑξὼ αἰσθήσεως ἐξαίρετως εὐφραίνειν τοῦ Σώματος, οὕτω τὰς ἐντὸς φωτίζει δυνάμεις τοῦ Πνεύματος. Cf. ch. 4.

82 P. Roilos, 'Phantasia and the ethics of fictionality in Byzantium: a cognitive anthropological perspective', in P. Roilos (ed.), *Medieval Greek Storytelling: Fictionality and Narrative in Byzantium* (Wiesbaden 2014) 9–30.

83 Bryennios, *Forty-Nine Chapters*, ch. 12: Ταῦτα δὲ πάντα πρὸς τῆς προνοίας οἰκονομεῖται, ἵνα καὶ ἡμεῖς αὐτὸν τὸν ἡμῶν Ἐπιστάτην γνωρίσωμεν.

84 Palamas, *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters*, ed. Sinkewicz, ch.50.

85 On *phantasia*, see Gregory of Sinai, *Chapters* ch. 118, 1284a and Kallistos and Ignatios Xanthopoulos, *Century*, ch. 65, ed. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca* 147, 745d.

86 Gregory of Sinai, *Chapters*, chs. 58–64, on the misleading role of *phantasia* and chs. 8–9 on the negative role of senses.

87 Ibid.

88 On *phantasia* as the main faculty of visualization, see Pizzzone, 'When Homer met Phantasia: Fiction, epic poetry and entertainment literature in Byzantium', *British Academy Review* 19 (2012) 42–45.

description, *enargeia*, and argued that this rhetorical quality arises from the appeal to senses.⁸⁹

Thus, it could be argued that this central role of senses and of calling images into one's mind (i.e. *phantasia*) in acquiring knowledge of divine attributes prompted Bryennios to use figurative language, consisting of a range of rhetorical analogies. Two major types of analogies can be distinguished in the *Forty-Nine Chapters*: one series of analogies highlights the co-substantiality of the divine realm and the created world; and another set of more symmetric analogies zooms into various aspects of human life. The first type of analogies holds a broad spectrum of connotations which reverberate with representations of cosmic magnitude. In ch. 4 (Περὶ Βίβλων εἰς γνῶσιν ἅπασι Προκειμένων), Bryennios assimilates the visible world (ὁ κόσμος) to a teacher of divine love⁹⁰ and states that the awareness of the harmonious divine design of the visible world arrives through the Scriptures, which in itself is a reminder of divine creation and presence.⁹¹ In a similar vein, in chs. 13–15, Bryennios constructs an extensive analogy between the physical world and the divine sphere. First, he assimilates aspects of Paradise to human life.

Πᾶς οὗτος ὁ Κόσμος Παράδεισός ἐστιν ἢ τοῦ ἐν Ἑδέμ Παραδείσου ἀνάλογος. Διὸ ὥσπερ ἐκεῖ τότε Ἀδάμ, Εὐά, ξύλον, ὄφις καθάπαξ, οὕτως ἐνταῦθα δι' ὅλου αὐτὰ ταῦτα ἢ παραπλήσια πεφύκασιν ἀληθῶς.

This entire world is the Paradise or resembling the Paradise in the Eden. Therefore, just as Adam, Eve, the tree, and the snake existed, in the same way here truly were begotten entirely the same or similar things.

Next, in ch. 14 (Ὅτι πολυφορώτατον δένδρον ὁ ἄνθρωπος), Bryennios continues with an elaborate analogy between humans and trees that produce a variety of fruits. Eventually, in ch. 15, he draws a comprehensive parallel between humans and God and between the world and God:

Πλοῖον καὶ οἰκία, Δικαστηρίον καὶ Πόλει, φυτὼ καὶ Γῇ καὶ Ουρανῷ, παντὶ κτίσματι καὶ Θεῷ ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὁμοῖος ἐστί. Τοῖς μὲν κατὰ τὴν πλάσιν τὴν ὁρωμένην, τοῖς δὲ κατὰ τὴν κίνησιν τὴν νοουμένην. Ὅφειλει γοῦν, ὥς μὲν πλοῖον, τὰ κύματα τοῦ θαλαττώδους βίου στέγων καὶ ἀποκρουόμενος. Ὡς δὲ οἰκία, τὸν ἐνοικον πάντοθεν περιθάλλειν Θεόν. ὥς δὲ Δικαστήριον, ἐν τούτῳ μάλιστα τηρεῖσθαι καὶ ἐκδικεῖσθαι τὰ δίκαια.

89 Isidore of Kiev, *Encomium for Emperor John VIII Palaiologos*, ed. S. Lampros, III (Athens 1926) 133. The role of senses is also mentioned in Gabalas' chapters, as well as other authors such as Gregory Palamas and Gregory of Sinai. In his *Foundations for an Imperial Education*, Manuel Palaiologos recommends his son to enjoy nature after long periods of hectic activity (ch. 21).

90 Bryennios, *Forty-Nine Chapters*, ch. 4: τὸν δὲ Κόσμον, ἥτοι τὴν κτίσιν τὴν ὁρωμένην, διδάσκαλον ἀγάπης ἡμῖν παρεστήσατο (ed. Boulgares).

91 Ibid: βιβλία εἰς μάθησιν τῶν πραγμάτων, καὶ γνῶσιν τὴν αὐτοῦ, ταῦτα προὔθηκεν ἡμῖν ὁ Θεός.

People are similar to ships and houses, to tribunals and cities, to plants and the earth and the sky, to the entire creation and to God. They are similar to some elements according to the visible form, and to others according to the rational motion. Therefore, it is fitting that, just like a ship, people avoid and repel the waves of a stormy life. Just like a house, they cherish God who lives inside. Just like a tribunal, in this life, they maintain justice and act justly to the highest extent.⁹²

Doubtless, in these instances, Bryennios drew upon the rich Byzantine homiletic and apologetic literature and, following the rules of these ecclesiastical genres, he constantly addresses the topic of divine omnipotence, as in ch. 6 where he compares God to the Sun,⁹³ while chapters 2 and 32 provide a comparison between God and physicians (ἰατροί), a standard analogy in ecclesiastical literature.⁹⁴ On this occasion, Bryennios seems to allude to the late Byzantine political landscape in which emperors often had to assert their authority against the growing influence of the Church. In encomiastic literature, emperors were also compared to *physicians*, in order to emphasize their being in charge of the citizens' protection.⁹⁵ Bryennios further signals his intention to participate in the contemporary debates over the limits of imperial authority in ch. 2 where he introduces a negative analogy between the worldly rulers and the divine one. The former ones, he says, are driven only by a desire to subject people and therefore are sinful, while God, the supreme *basileus*, is forgiving, despite his infinite omnipotence.⁹⁶

This extensive analogy between worldly rulers and God resembles other analogies in the court rhetoric of the late fourteenth century, which portrayed emperors as closely reflecting God's attributes and as possessing a divine mandate to govern.⁹⁷ Imperial panegyrics, as well as counseling literature, depicted the emperors as being God's representatives on Earth and partaking in his powers without the mediation of the

92 Ibid, ch. 15.

93 Ibid, ch. 6: Ὡςπερ γὰρ νῦν Ἡλίου λαμπρόντος ἅπαντα φανεροῦνται τὰ ὑπὲρ γῆν, οὕτω τότε Θεοῦ καὶ πάντων λαμπρόντων, καὶ Θεὸν καὶ ἑαυτοὺς καὶ ἀλλήλους καὶ πανθ' ὡς ἔχει λόγου καὶ φύσεως ἐπιγινώσκονται.

94 The image of God who can heal various kinds of serious afflictions, such as epilepsy or blindness, is especially present in homiletic and hagiographic literature. See A. Horden, 'Saints and doctors in the early Byzantine empire: The case of Theodore Sykeon', *Studies in Church History* 19 (1982) 1–13 and J. Duffy, 'Byzantine medicine in the sixth and seventh centuries: Aspects of teaching and practice', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 38 (1984) 21–7.

95 The image of the emperor ἰατρός belonged to a set of stock epithets used throughout panegyrics or official documents. E.g. P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel Komnenos* (Cambridge 2002) 465.

96 Bryennios, *Forty-Nine Chapters*, ch. 2: Οἱ βασιλεῖς ἅπαντες τοὺς ποτὲ ὑποχειρίους, ἀντάρτας αὐτῶν γενομένους, ἐπὶ χειρώσονται, καὶ ἰσχύσωσι κατ' αὐτῶν γενομένους, ἀφανισμῷ τελείῳ, καὶ αὐτοὺς ἐκείνους, καὶ πάντα τὰ αὐτῶν σὺν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ, ἥτοι τῷ τολμηθέντι αὐτοῖς, ἄρδην παραδιδόασιν. Ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς τῆς δόξης Θεοῦ διὰ τὴν ἄκραν αὐτοῦ ἀγαθότητα, τὴν μὲν ἁμαρτίαν (...) ἐξαφανίσει ἢ θέλησε δια τοῦ θανάτου.

97 See Manuel Palaiologos, *Foundations*, ch. 51.

ecclesiastical authority of the patriarch.⁹⁸ However, at the turn of the fifteenth century, many ecclesiastics, who included prominent figures of theologians and canonists such as Makarios of Ankara or Symeon of Thessalonike, contested the imperial authority on the grounds of canonical regulations.⁹⁹ Therefore, it is not far-fetched to state that in the early fifteenth century, when Bryennios returned to Constantinople and composed the chapters, his reference to divine omnipotence served the speculations of a group of ecclesiastics who positioned themselves against the emperor's rights to intervene in the affairs of the Church.

As much as Bryennios emphasized divine omnipotence, he also integrated other, more complex analogies that touched upon aspects of the divine economy. In an extended comparison in ch. 10, he addresses the importance of the Church: the Church is like a hospital for the suffering, a school for imparting knowledge, a tribunal for those who seek justice, an army, a paradise, a meadow, a spring, a mother etc. In several other instances, Bryennios explains the intricacies of theological principles by resorting to analogies with natural elements. In chapter 16, the Trinity is compared with the three elements of the Sun: the discus, the rays, and the light which correspond to divine singularity, the divine attributes, and God's presence respectively. Likewise, ch. 24 provides another comparison between the image of the cross and the four winds:

Συμφυῆς τῷ Κόσμῳ καὶ σύγχρονος, καὶ τοῖς ἐν αὐτῷ καλλίστοις, ὁ τοῦ Σταυροῦ τύπος [...]. Εὐθὺς γὰρ ὕψος καὶ βάθος, μῆκος καὶ πλάτος, συνυφέστηκε τῷ Παντί. Ανατολῇ καὶ Δύσει, Ἄρκτος καὶ Μεσημβρία, ἐνθεωρεῖται τῇ κλίσει. Ἄνεμοι ἐνθεν σταυροειδῶς πνέουσιν.

The form of the Cross has the same nature and the same age as the World and with all the best elements therein. The height and the depth, the length and the width came straightaway into being together with the universe. East and West, North and South are observed in the bending. Whence, the winds blow as in a cross.

Then, in ch. 26, Bryennios further develops an analogy between the afterlife and the earthly life and draws upon the idea of the heavenly Jerusalem as a universal home:

πόλις ἡμῶν πέφυκεν ἀληθὴς ἢ ἄνω Ἱερουσαλήμ. Ξένοι πεφύκαμεν τῶν ἡμετέρων τούτων οἰκῶν, ὅτι οἰκίαν ἔχομεν ἀχειροποίητον ἐν Οὐρανοῖς.

Our home city is the heavenly Jerusalem. We were born as strangers from our own home because we have a heavenly home not made by hands.

98 E.g. Demetrios Chrysoloras, *One Hundred Letters*, ch. 23: ἐγὼ καὶ τὸ βασιλέως ἴσον λογίζομαι τῷ Θεῷ, ἀλλ' ὅμως ἐκείνος κρεμάνμενος ἀφῆκεν ἀμαρτάνουσιν ἅπαντα, ἅφες καὶ σὺ νῦν ἐμὸν ἐκείνου μιμητὴς ὢν.

99 Cf. V. Laurent, 'Le trisépiscopat du Patriarche Matthieu Ier (1397–1410): Un grand procès canonique à Byzance au début du XV^eme siècle', *Revue des études byzantines* 30 (1972) 5–166.

The idea of the afterlife is developed in visual terms in two more analogies. In ch. 27, Bryennios depicts the event of the second coming of Christ in naturalistic terms:

Ὡσπερ γὰρ νῦν Ἡλίου λάμποντος ἅπαντα φανεροῦνται τὰ ὑπὲρ γῆν, οὕτω καὶ τότε Θεοῦ καὶ πάντων λαμπόντων, καὶ Θεὸν καὶ ἑαυτοὺς καὶ ἀλλήλους ἐπιγνώσονται. [...] Καὶ πρῶτον μὲν ἡ βασιλικὴ καὶ Θεία Σημηλία ὁ τοῦ Κυρίου Σταυρὸς φανήσεται ἐν τῷ Οὐρανῷ λάμπων ὑπὲρ τὸν Ἥλιον, Ἀγίων Ἀγγέλων περιστοιχέντων αὐτόν.

Just as now the earthly creation is revealed when the Sun shines over everything, in the same way then, when God and everything will be shining, they will witness God, and themselves and each other. And first, as a kingly and divine sign, the Cross of the Lord will appear in the Sky shining over the Sun with the holy angels embracing it.

A minute description follows of the second coming of Christ, in which Bryennios emphasizes the sensorial aspects of the event: watching the saints, hearing their chants and hymns, etc. Later, maintaining a similar visual emphasis upon the afterlife, in ch. 32 (Περὶ τῆς τοῦ Κόσμου Διαιρέσεως καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ διαφορῶν), Bryennios provides an explanatory analogy about the three levels of the world: the heavens, the earth, and the underworld (Hades).

The emphasis upon visual representations becomes even more apparent in the use of another type of analogies pertaining to daily life realities. Unlike the previous type of analogies that extend over several chapters, these have a more limited scope. Some of the analogies touch upon the negative emotions and types of behavior which alter reasoning and the acquisition of valid knowledge conducive to ethical behavior. In ch. 8, regarding excessive patience, Bryennios compares emotions with night dreams which might undermine one's actions. Ch. 25 deals with human sins and draws a parallel with the actions of pagan gods: *Envy* echoes the personality of Chronos; *Drunkenness*-Dionysus; *Divination*-Apollo; *Prostitution*-Aphrodite; *Money-loving*-Hermes. Moreover, because all such *afflictions of the soul*, πάθη ψυχῆς, correspond to a pagan god, Bryennios concludes that they reflect cases of idolatry.

Other analogies address concrete issues of ethics and behavior. In ch. 28 (Ὅτι ἔστι σταδιοδρόμος πᾶς ὁ ἄνθρωπος σωθῆναι βουλόμενος), Bryennios provides an extensive analogy between one's own life and an athletic race. Although he proceeds cautiously and indicates that he speaks only hypothetically (λέγειν ἐν ὑποδείγματι), Bryennios offers a vivid depiction of a race with crowds of cheering spectators: life is similar to a stadium, he states, while God sits on the highest throne in the middle of the audience with the angels and the saints surrounding Him. Such a race, Bryennios explains, has numerous obstacles and, in order to finish it, the competitors not only need to have a strong body but also a strong soul. Bryennios constructs an elaborate picture of the race: among the spectators, he includes beautiful women and well-dressed youths, while there is also instrumental music which he resembles to

that of the ‘Sirens’.¹⁰⁰ All these features are meant to distract athletes (σταδιοδρόμοι) from their supreme goal of reaching the end of the race. In another analogy from the same category, Bryennios compares the flow of time with the flow of water (ch. 33). The created world (*kosmos*) is similar to a tree that engenders as fruits two types of dreams: pleasurable and bitter. He then compares these types of dreams to *phantasiai* which, he states, do not have much impact upon one’s course of life. Again, here he avoids the heavily negative connotations of *phantasia* present in other texts of theological chapters such as Palamas’ *One hundred and fifty chapters*.¹⁰¹ Likewise, in ch. 22, Bryennios draws a parallel between individuals, the physical world, and the divine realm. On this occasion, he states that people partake both into (μετέχουσιν) elements of the natural world (earth, plants, etc.) and into the divine (angels, spirit, God).

The above overview of the two types of analogies indicates the pervasiveness of figurative language which admittedly underlined the author’s didactic strategy in the *Forty-Nine Chapters*. In most chapters, Bryennios uses a consistent structure with definitions and illustrations that develop into extensive moral and theological treatments. Several reasons behind this approach can be distinguished. First, given the author’s acquaintance with the norms of the ancient Greek literary tradition, it is plausible that he sought to apply rhetorical amplification, an ancient technique which aimed at increasing persuasiveness through sheer accumulation and the repetition of images.¹⁰² As part of the rhetorical *invention*, amplification also aimed at heightening certain effects.¹⁰³ In Bryennios’ case, the intended effect was admittedly didactic and, if other texts offered only general hints on virtues in the form of aphorisms or philosophical reflection, he provided extensive visual illustrations pertaining to the necessity of practicing virtues. His use of amplification further arises in the combined use of two rhetorical devices which have long been associated therewith:¹⁰⁴ *synaesthesia*, i.e. the presentation of phenomena through recourse to all senses, and the *locus amoenus* topos, which he reproduces in all its standard details (trees, brooks, singing birds).¹⁰⁵ Thus, in several analogies, he describes the wonders of the created world by taking as reference points the five senses to which he ascribes the pleasure of perceiving the physical elements of the environment:

100 Bryennios, *Forty-Nine Chapters*, ch. 28: ἱματίων ποικιλία καὶ στρωμνὰ εὐώδεις· μουσικῶν καὶ ὀργάνων ἴσχυες καὶ ὧδων Σειρήνες, πρὸς ἑαυτὰ ἐφέλκεται καὶ δέσμευ.

101 See above.

102 On repetition as a means of persuasion, see K. Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives* (Berkeley 1950) 16.

103 On ancient rhetorical amplification, see G. Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric and its Christian and Secular Tradition* (London 1999) 110 and 221.

104 Ibid.

105 On the use of *locus amoenus* and *synaesthesia* as categories of rhetorical amplifications in medieval rhetoric, see R. Hunter, *Towards a Definition of Topos: Approaches to Analogical Reasoning* (London 1991) 17–19.

ἅπαντα δὲ, ὡς ὁρῶμεν, δωροφορεῖ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ. Οὐρανὸς σκέπει, ἥλιος φωτίζει, Ἄηρ πνοὴν παρέχει, καὶ χώραν εἰς μετάβασιν. Γῆ καὶ βαστάζει καὶ παρέχει τροφάς. ὕδωρ ποτίζει πλύνει καὶ ψύχει. Ζῶα καὶ φυτὰ τὰ μὲν τρέφει ἢ τέρπει τὰ δὲ γε παντοίως ὑπηρετεῖ. Ταῦτα δὲ πάντα πρὸς τῆς προνοίας οἰκονομεῖται, ἵνα καὶ ἡμεῖς αὐτὸν τὸν ἡμῶν Ἐπιστάτην γνωρίσωμεν.¹⁰⁶

(God), as we see, gives everything as a gift to man. The Heaven protects, the Sun illuminates, the Air gives us breathing and space to move. The Earth bears and offers nourishment. The water quenches thirst, washes, and refreshes. Animals and plants support life, offer delight, and are entirely in our service. These are all regulated by *pronoia* so that we know God as our Governor.

Furthermore, Bryennios' approach reflected his attested interest in pictorial representations, a preoccupation which he developed during his long stay in Crete. We know from his letters that he was in close contact with local Cretan painters¹⁰⁷ such as Alexios Apokaukos, to whom he dedicated the *Forty-Nine Chapters* and who portrayed the 'decadence' of the local population in his church frescoes.¹⁰⁸ As previously argued, in this period, under the influence of Western art, late Byzantine painters in Crete adopted a new trend that emphasized vividness of representation and privileged realistic details.¹⁰⁹ Ever since his early homilies delivered in Crete, Bryennios drew upon artistic representations in order to explain key theological concepts. For instance, he discussed the Holy Trinity in pictorial terms as being a union of three circles which shared the colours of the rainbow.¹¹⁰ In other texts, Bryennios made direct references to pictorial representations of the inferno and of the Last Judgement, two of the most popular topics among the Cretan painters of this period. On one occasion, he noted that the church painters mistakenly represented the apostles during the Last Judgement when, according to the Scriptures, only God was considered to be present.¹¹¹

The high number of visual metaphors and similes further underpinned the author's literary and didactic intentions. On the one hand, he seemingly capitalized upon the

106 Bryennios, *Forty-Nine Chapters*, ch. 12.

107 He addressed six letters to Alexios Apokaukos, whom he considered to be a close friend. Letters nos. 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 24, ed. N. Tomadakes, 'Ἐκ τῆς βυζαντινῆς ἐπιστολογραφίας. Ἰωσήφ μοναχοῦ τοῦ Βρυεννίου Ἐπιστολαὶ Α' καὶ πρὸς αὐτὸν Γ'', 283–362.

108 S. Maderakes, 'Θέματα της εικονογραφικῆς παράδοσης της Κρήτης', *Theologia* 61 (1990) 713–777 and *Theologia* 62 (1991) 150–7. Cf. also eadem, 'Ἡ κόλαση καὶ οἱ ποινές των κολασμένων σαν θέματα της Δευτέρας Παρουσίας στις ἐκκλησίες της Κρήτης', *Υδωρ εκ Πέτρας* 3 (1981) 51–130.

109 N. Panagiotakes (ed.), *Κρήτη: Ἱστορία καὶ πολιτισμός* (Athens 1998) 74–5.

110 Joseph Bryennios, *Homilies*, ed. Boulgares, I (Leipzig 1768) 46.

111 Ibid., 301–2: καὶ πρὸς τῶν ζωγράφων οἱ ἀπόστολοι διατυποῦνται καθήμενοι ἐν τῇ κρίσει μετὰ Χριστοῦ· ἀλλὰ τὸ πάγιον καὶ μόνιμον καὶ ἐδραῖον τῆς τούτων δόξης, ὁ λόγος αἰνίτται· μόνος δ' ἄρα ὁ Κύριος οἶον ἐξ ὄρων τῶν Ἑλαίων ἀνελήφθη, καὶ οἶος νῦν κάθηται ἐν δεξιᾷ τῆς μεγαλωσύνης, τὸ τηνικαῦτα καθιεῖται κριτής, ἄνθρωπος κρίνων ἀνθρώπους...καὶ ὁ Παράκλητος.

stylistic differences from other collections of chapters. Such an approach, that privileged teaching by rich analogies, contrasted heavily with both the gnostic moralization of contemporary authors of *kephalaia*, such as Manuel Palaiologos and Demetrios Chrysoloras, as well as with the schematic view on virtues emerging in monastic chapters such as those of Gregory of Sinai. Arguably, this strategy indicated Bryennios' shift from the idea that didactic authority relied upon past authorities towards the notion of teaching through the natural elements of the created world.

On the other hand, the visualization of the worldly wonders achieved by the recourse to analogies, and through the appeal to perception and *phantasia*, allowed Bryennios to approach the main theme of the Cretans' behavior in a distinct, didactic framework that abandoned direct address present in all the other contemporary chapters. As recent studies on figurative language indicated, the presence of multiple analogies signals an intention to validate an author's messages and ideas.¹¹² Indeed, Bryennios' moralization emerges as being more effective in combining spiritual and practical issues. Likewise, rhetorical theory pointed out that analogies stress relations rather than individual objects and phenomena.¹¹³ From this perspective, the numerous analogies between the physical environment and the divine order present in the *Forty-Nine Chapters* suggest their likeness and downplay their difference. Contrary to other authors of *kephalaia* such as Gregory of Sinai, who emphasized the ontological differences between the created world and the divine, Bryennios' analogies rather typified a network of positive relations between the two realms, an idea which allows him to effectively highlight his moral teachings.¹¹⁴

One notch down, the contrast with other contemporary *kephalaia* allows us to relate the *Forty-Nine Chapters* to its audiences and to understand the text's functions in the intellectual and social contexts of late Byzantium. First, the text was appropriate for the effective dissemination of its moralizing message amid his primary audience, the monastic community in Crete. As Bazini indicated, Bryennios circulated the *Forty-Nine Chapters* after he returned to Constantinople and his former flock beseeched him to send a moral reminder.¹¹⁵ Although his audience consisted mostly of monks, Bryennios focused upon both mores and basic theological notions, and unlike other contemporary authors of monastic *kephalaia* such as Gregory of Sinai or Gregory Palamas, he avoided the themes connected with Hesychasm. As indicated in the preface, he chose a plain literary strategy aimed at exposing the Cretans' lifestyle

112 See D. Punter, *Metaphor* (New York 2007) 11–25.

113 C. Perelman, *A Treatise on Argumentation* (London 1969) 354–7.

114 Palamas' *One Hundred and Fifty Chapters* have been divided into two sections: the first sixty-three chapters discuss the divine economy of creation and the physical spheres (terrestrial and celestial) and another one (chs. 63–150) in which Palamas combats the Akyndinist position and approaches issues related to divine illumination and energies. For a discussion of this distinction, see Sinkewicz, *Saint Gregory Palamas*, 1–55.

115 Bazini, 'Une première édition', 96.

which he perceived as wrongful.¹¹⁶ In this strategy, visual analogies generated a contrast between an idealized representation of the created world as divine creation and the widespread sins of his primary audience. This stylistic choice, together with the emphasis on practical matters in his moralization, suggests that Bryennios merged the effects of the monastic-beneficial, moral-political *kephalaia*, and homilies.

Second, when considering the *Forty-Nine Chapters* against the historical and literary background of late Byzantium, we can also detect the author's attempt to fashion an intellectual identity befitting the competitive Constantinopolitan rhetorical milieu.¹¹⁷ Dating from the years preceding the period when Bryennios became a prominent figure in the Byzantine court, this text with its distinctive rhetorical features reflects the author's efforts to connect with the literary fashions and models of the time. Such efforts can already be detected in his letters sent to high profile Constantinopolitans during his two-decades-long Cretan sojourn. In many of these epistles, he praised the rhetorical skills of his addressees and used a more sophisticated style than we usually encounter in his sermons or other religious texts.¹¹⁸ In addition, his attachment to the intellectual circles of Constantinople is signaled by his imitating the foundational role of *kephalaia* within a broader didactic program. As mentioned above, late Byzantine *kephalaia* were often explicitly linked to other didactic texts. Since the *kephalaia* in Bryennios' *Cretan corpus* also stood as the first text in a collection that included other texts of advice, it is not far-fetched to assume that the *Forty-Nine Chapters* were intended as the foundation of a comprehensive didactic program in the form of a spiritual legacy for his former community. At the same time, such a didactic program enabled him to establish a rhetorical authority, which he later used in the intense political debates that saw numerous Byzantine scholars trying to find solutions to the empire's difficulties preceding its final demise in 1453.

Conclusion

In summary, this study argued that Joseph Bryennios' *Forty-Nine Chapters* provides not only valuable evidence regarding widespread social practices of the late fourteenth century but also an example of how he adapted the genre of *kephalaia* according to his didactic intentions as well as to his audience in Crete and Constantinople. So far, only a few researchers have examined the collections of chapters in terms of their rhetoric or underlying didactic strategies. In doing so, scholars have pointed to the influence of gnomic collections and florilegia of wisdom literature on *chapter* literature. As indicated by the analysis of several representative texts, many late

116 Joseph Bryennios, *Προθεωρία*, ed. Boulgares, *Τὰ παραλειπομένα* (Leipzig 1784) 48: τοῦ γὰρ ἀπλουστέρου καὶ σαφοῦς φροντίσαντες καὶ τοῦ ἐγχωρίου τῶν Κρητῶν ἥθους πρὸς οὓς καὶ γέγραπται, οὕτω ταῦτα τεθείκαμεν.

117 On the late Byzantine Constantinopolitan literary circles and the competition among scholars, see N. Gaul, *Thomas Magistros und die spätbyzantinische Sophistik* (Wiesbaden 2011) 17–61 and 169–210.

118 For a discussion of these letters, see Loenertz, 'Pour la chronologie', 13.

Byzantine *kephalaia*, whether originating in the monastic or in the court milieu, relied heavily upon wise formulations, maxims, and gnomic statements. Subsequently, the *kephalaia* held not only a high degree of similarity in terms of their focus upon ethics, but also constructed an idea of didactic authority based on their authors' expertise, strengthened by the appeal to the foresight of the ancients. In turn, Bryennios, by choosing to employ visual metaphors and similes instead of a direct gnomic approach, departed from other contemporary didactic authors especially in terms of the rhetorical technique he used. Thereby, he suggested that the created world, and the rhetorical representation thereof, can be a teacher of virtues as good as the heritage of the past.

Paramilitarism, politics and organized crime during the Greek civil war (1945–1949)¹

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The historiography of the Greek civil war has made significant progress during the past decade, but the origins, role and activities of paramilitaries remain under-researched. Most studies have focused on the period of the ‘white terror’ and explored the collusion between the state and the paramilitary groups. Although such studies have advanced our understanding of this turbulent period, they have not discussed important issues such as the motivation of the rank and file members, the sociopolitical networks used to recruit and mobilize support and the diverse conditions under which militias emerge. The article will address this lacuna and provide new insights into the origins, development and legacies of paramilitarism.

Keywords: paramilitaries; state-sanctioned violence; collusion; warfare; organized crime

Civil wars are usually represented as binary conflicts waged between clearly defined ideological and military camps. In recent years, scholars have challenged these perceptions and underlined the role of militias, criminal gangs and paramilitary outfits in civil conflict. The article contributes to this burgeoning historiography by discussing the origins, role and impact of paramilitary groups during the Greek civil war. While the historiography of the civil war has made significant progress during the past decade, the origins, role and activities of paramilitaries remain under-researched. The dearth of research on this phenomenon can be observed not only in Greek historiography. Despite the increasing preeminence of non-state armed actors in recent conflicts,

Researchers have tended to disregard the proliferation of armed actors who emerge during an armed conflict to fight on behalf of the state and/or against the rebels ... although militias emerge in most conflicts, rarely are they part of comparative studies of civil wars, be they empirical or theoretical.²

1 Research for this article was supported by the Frank Harry Guggenheim Foundation.

2 C. Jentsch, S. Kalyvas, L. Schubiger, ‘Militias in civil wars’, *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 59.5 (2015) 756.

Paramilitaries operate in a twilight zone located between the civilian and the military realm under a host of monikers such as ‘militias’, ‘death squads’ and ‘self-defence groups’.³ Distinguishing them from their rivals, let alone other non-state actors, such as criminal clans, vigilantes and gangs, is a complex task because ‘the term “paramilitary” has been used colloquially as a type of catch-all rather than with any element of precision or analytic conceptualization’.⁴ The same factors make a systematic analysis of their motives and activities particularly complex. Paramilitary groups are particularly careful not to leave a paper trail, while veterans are often unwilling to write or speak about their experiences.⁵

These problems are quite pronounced in the study of paramilitarism during the Greek civil war. Most studies have focused on the period of the ‘white terror’ and explored the collusion between the state and the paramilitary groups. Although such studies have considerably advanced our understanding of this turbulent period, they have not discussed important issues such as the motivation of the rank-and-file members, the socio-political networks used to recruit and mobilize support and the diverse conditions under which militias emerge.⁶ At the same time, their view of paramilitarism as being a centrally created phenomenon has overlooked the diverse origins of these groups and their often contentious relationship with the state. Militiamen were often described as state manipulated thugs. However, as Paul Staniland noted, ‘subservience to the state ‘is only one possible ... strategy’ for the paramilitaries, as ‘militias may also be violently targeted by regimes, absorbed into the state apparatus, or contained as a low level but endemic challenge. They are not intrinsically subservient junior partners of governments.’⁷

The article draws upon a wide range of sources; memoirs, oral testimonies, police and army archives and the private correspondence of politicians, army officers and paramilitary leaders in order to address three questions. What prompted the emergence of paramilitaries? What were their relations to the state? What was the impact of paramilitarism upon the socio-political landscape? The article demonstrates that paramilitary mobilization was a grassroots response, prompted by the inability of the post-war state to re-impose its authority and deal with the challenges of post-war reconstruction. The militias had a decidedly local character and were highly suspicious of the state. Nonetheless, self-interest and an obsessive fear of the Left led the state and the militias to form an alliance. The predatory activities of the militias and their flagrant abuse of power complicated their relations with the military authorities, who

3 J. Mazzei, *Death Squads or Self-Defence Forces? How Paramilitary Groups Emerge and Challenge Democracy in Latin America* (Chapel Hill 2009) 216–17.

4 Op. cit., 217.

5 F. Sanín, ‘Telling the difference: Guerrillas and paramilitaries in the Colombian war’, *Politics & Society* 36.1 (2008) 3–5.

6 T. Kostopoulos, ‘Η λευκή τρομοκρατία’, in *Η Ιστορία των Νέων Ελλήνων*, XVII (Athens 2006) 76–117; S. Marketos, ‘Η ελληνική άκρα δεξιά στην δεκαετία του 40’, in H. Hatzioisif (ed.), *Ιστορία της Ελλάδος του 20^{ου} Αιώνα*, IV (Athens 2009) 286–325.

7 P. Staniland, ‘Militias, ideology, and the state’, *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 59.2 (2015) 772.

saw them as a liability. There were repeated attempts to disperse them, but their ties to the political world prevented this and eventually transformed the paramilitaries into independent political players. This situation had important repercussions as their continuous significance and ties to a section of the political and security establishments disrupted the political and social life of the country for years to come.

The political origins of paramilitarism

The liberation of Greece in October 1944 was followed by months of political tension that finally resulted, during December 1944, in a violent clash between the National Popular Liberation Army (ELAS), the government forces and their British allies. After over a month of fighting, the government and the political branch of the resistance, the National Liberation Front (EAM), opened negotiations that resulted in the signing of the Varkiza Accord in February 1945. The accord entailed, among other provisions, free and impartial elections and the demobilization of ELAS.⁸ The accord was greeted with relief by a very large segment of the population that had been exhausted by years of fratricidal struggle and pauperization. Nevertheless, within a few weeks, fighting resumed as leftist and rightist bands clashed across the country. The origins and motivations behind this violence have been strongly disputed. Some historians have attributed the blame to the Left,⁹ while others have described this period as a ‘one-sided’ civil war waged by paramilitary gangs that were formed and equipped by the state to re-impose the *status quo ante bellum*.¹⁰ More recent studies have questioned these narratives and called for a more careful discussion of the motivations and patterns of violence during this period.¹¹

The *Dekemvriana*, as these events were called, dealt a powerful blow at the anemic efforts towards reconstruction. The Minister for Home Affairs, Konstantinos Tsatsos, noted that in the aftermath of Varkiza ‘the state apparatus was limited to some of the regional capitals...the gendarmerie was undermanned ... many civil service positions were vacant’.¹² The government was unable to offer the most basic social services or impose a semblance of order in the anarchic countryside.¹³

The weakness of the state allowed the Communist Left to retain its hold in many rural areas. Kostas Taliadouros, a political ally of Tsatsos, reported that in his home-region of

8 S. Gasparinatos, *Απελευθέρωση, Δεκεμβριανά, Βάρκιζα* (Athens 1998).

9 J. Koliopoulos, *Plundered Loyalties: WWII and Civil War in Greek West Macedonia* (New York 1999).

10 D. Close, *The Origins of the Greek Civil War* (London 1995); G. Margaritis, *Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Εμφυλίου 1946–1949*, I (Athens 2000); P. Voglis, *Η αδύνατη επανάσταση: η κοινωνική δυναμική του Εμφυλίου* (Athens 2014).

11 For a detailed discussion of the dynamics of violence during the Greek civil war see S. Plakoudas, *The Greek Civil War: Strategy, Counterinsurgency and the Monarchy* (London 2017) 20–6; see also S. Kalyvas and N. Marantzidis, *Εμφύλια πάθη: 23+2 νέες ερωτήσεις και απαντήσεις για τον Εμφύλιο* (Athens 2016).

12 Gennadeios Library, K. Tsatsos Archive, Διά να γίνωμεν κράτος, File 50.4, August 1945.

13 Dieftthinsi Istorias Stratou (henceforth DIS), *Αρχεία Εμφυλίου Πολέμου 1944–1949*, II (Athens 1998) 46.

Thessaly the Left 'was more powerful' than the state and 'had not lost control of the situation even for a moment'.¹⁴ The situation was similar in Epirus, and in parts of the Peloponnese and Macedonia.¹⁵ The resilience of the Left incensed conservative civilians who complained that the Left had no intention of honouring the Varkiza agreement.¹⁶ These perceptions were reinforced after the government passed a decree that called for the replacement of the EAM councillors with state-appointed ones.¹⁷ EAM councillors refused to resign from their positions and in many cases 'encouraged their followers to resist the newly appointed village councils'.¹⁸ Government-backed mayors were attacked and, in some cases, murdered by left-wing activists.¹⁹

Poverty and unemployment further heightened these rivalries. Axis reprisals, a lack of resources and the constant demands of ELAS guerrillas for food, provisions and materiel had denuded local economies. Thousands of peasants depended upon foreign aid for food and clothing. Control of these resources became a key issue in local power struggles.²⁰ The authorities were flooded with urgent requests for the replacement of village councils and mayors or the return of previous occupants.²¹ In many rural areas 'rivalries over the distribution of food and other Red Cross and UNRRA provisions ... resulted in brawls ... and on more than one occasion to bloodshed'.²²

These tensions were exacerbated by the presence of numerous bands of ELAS veterans who had refused to demobilize. The Minister for Home Affairs estimated that between 1000 and 1400 guerrillas had refused to lay down their arms.²³ Such bands were particularly active in western and central Macedonia, where guerrillas and Macedonian autonomists attacked gendarmerie stations and border patrols, assassinated local notables and sabotaged installations and infrastructure.²⁴ Renegade bands that refused to accept the Varkiza accord were also present in southern Greece, where they held up buses and trucks, raided UNRRA depots and murdered state-appointed mayors.²⁵

The presence of the bands created a morbid climate of fear and suspicion among conservative civilians who were terrified that a left-wing coup was on its way. A retired

14 Gennadeios Library, Tsatsos Archive, Επιστολή Κ. Ταλιαδούρου, Box 50, Folder 1, 3/5/1945.

15 DIS, *Αρχαία Εμφυλίου Πολέμου 1944–1949*, Vol. 2, 50–76.

16 Genika Archeia tou Kratous (henceforth GAK), Petimezas Archive, Υπόμνημα της Ενωμένης Δημοκρατικής Αντιπολιτεύσεως, 163, 19/1/1947.

17 Gennadeios, Tsatsos Archive, Διά να γίνωμεν κράτος.

18 DIS, *Archeia Emfylion Polemou*, I, 544.

19 DIS, Πρέβεζα, Έκθεσις επί της καταστάσεως εις την περιοχήν της στρατιωτικής διοικήσεως, 1372/A/1, 2/5/1945; Gennadeios Library, Tsatsos Archive, Επιστολή/1, 3/5/1945.

20 DIS, *Αρχαία Εμφυλίου Πολέμου*, I, 503.

21 Istoriko Archeio Makedonias, Geniki Dioikisi Dytkis Makedonias, Επιστολή προς τη Γενική Διοίκηση, Καισάρεια Κοζάνη, File 49.1/71, 16/4/46.

22 G. Christakis, *Ο εμφύλιος και οι συνέπειες του στην επαρχία Βιάννου* (Heraklion 2005) 47.

23 GAK, Archeio Vasilikon Anaktoron, Επιστολή Γ. Ζαλοκώστα προς Β. Γεώργιον, File 94/439.

24 Gennadeios Library, F. Dragoumis Archive, Επιστολή προς Φ. Δραγούμη, Καστοριά, File 69.2, 27/3/1945.

25 DIS, Υποβολή εκθέσεων περί καταστάσεως εις περιοχή ΑΣΔΗ, Ιωάννινα, File 1372/A/1/2, 12/5/1945; 'Οι τρομοκράται, η Κυνουρία τελεί υπό το κράτος της ληστοκρατίας των κακοποιών', *Αλήθεια*, 11/6/1945.

army officer noted in early 1945 that, despite the government's victory in the *Dekemvriana*, 'the national-minded population was convinced that the (communist) danger was far from diminished'.²⁶ Such feelings were even more widespread in northern Greece, where conservative civilians believed that the 'present government will last even less than Kerensky's administration in Russia'. A local civil servant bemoaned to his superiors that government leaders were 'weak and pathetic in sharp contrast to the 'young, courageous and combative cohorts of the notorious Zachariadis, who could be safely described as the Greek Lenin'.²⁷ These views were aggressively propagated by the right-wing press, which warned its readers that 'anarchy is at the gates ... the anarchists are lurking in the wings ... their aim is to create unrest and take advantage of popular discontent to facilitate the imposition of red fascism'.²⁸

These fears led to a violent swing towards the Right among republicans, moderates and even some social democrats who saw the reinstitution of the monarchy as being the only way to avert a communist takeover.²⁹ Conservative associations and citizen groups pressured the government to adopt a more belligerent policy. Activists petitioned Tsatsos to provide them with guns and help them organize militias that would then assist the gendarmerie in suppressing the Left. Such demands were rejected by Tsatsos and his colleagues in the cabinet.³⁰

This refusal further alienated activists and ordinary civilians, many of whom came to believe that addressing their grievances through the formal channels was impossible. Fear and distrust encouraged the development of an increasingly parochial mentality. Some activists claimed that the entire government apparatus was infiltrated by the Left and 'there isn't a single prefect, governor general, mayor or village president who doesn't think like a communist'.³¹ Many conservatives came to believe that in light of this situation a violent confrontation was inevitable. An intelligence officer reported that conservative civilians 'have no trust whatsoever in the state because of the instability of the political scenery and the constant jockeying for position among the parties ... they refuse to co-operate with the state ... and view the authorities with extreme suspicion, preferring to settle their differences through violence.' The report concluded by noting that the nationalists had not formed any military organizations so far and that most acts of violence were committed by 'isolated individuals' and small, makeshift bands. However, the author believed that this was going to change soon. Subsequent events vindicated this prediction.³²

26 G. Raptis, *Συμβολή στην ιστορία της Ναυπακτίας, γεγονότα περιόδου 1940–1950* (Nafpaktos 2003) 317.

27 Gennadeios Library, F. Dragoumis Archive, Έκθεση του φρονήματος του λαού της Θεσσαλονίκης, File 69.2, 15/08/1945.

28 'Η αναρχία επί θύραις', *Αλήθεια*, 8/6/1945.

29 Gennadeios Library, K. Tsatsos Archive, Για το δημονήφισμα/εκλογικό νόμο, Box 50, File 4, 1946.

30 Gennadeios Library, K. Tsatsos Archive, Επιστολή στον Γ. Παπανδρέου, Box 51, Folder 7, 25/5/1945.

31 Gennadeios Library, F. Dragoumis Archive, Έκθεση του φρονήματος.

32 DIS, Ανωτέρα στρατιωτική διοίκησής Ηπείρου/1372/A/1, 2/8/1945.

Recruitment and operations

The first paramilitary bands emerged in April 1945.³³ These militias have been occasionally described as being a single-minded, united force that operated under an effective and ruthless leadership. The reality on the ground was very different. A senior conservative noted that the bands lacked ‘any discipline or central co-ordination.’³⁴ Militias were broadly divided into two categories. The first consisted of ‘parochial groups’:³⁵ small, locally based organizations that lacked any formal structure. Such groups were not new to the countryside. Rural elites had a tradition of raising self-defence groups, private police forces and vigilantes to protect their interests and assist them in their feuds. Such groups were institutionalized during the dictatorship of general Theodoros Pangalos, which made extensive use of militias against minorities, irredentist groups and brigands.³⁶

Militias were thus able to build upon local traditions and pre-existing social networks in order to mobilize and operate. Parochial groups organized around natural leaders; notables and local ‘hard men’, many of whom had served sentences for rustling, robbery and assault, and recruited members who were familiar with one another from the same village, quarter or neighbourhood. Local militias in Messinia were formed around groups of fellow-villagers and relatives.³⁷ A similar pattern of mobilization was common in the uplands of Achaea, where militiamen had often ‘known each other since before the war and were inseparable’,³⁸ in the prefecture of Nafpaktos, where many militias were formed with the help of local youth gangs,³⁹ and in Epirus, where militia members were often members of the same extended family.⁴⁰

These groups were relatively small but they could count upon a large number of part-timers who joined for the duration of an operation and then returned to their normal routine afterwards. Accordingly, their remit was usually limited to a single village or quarter and was shaped by local conditions, such as demography and communal relations. Collaboration between them was relatively uncommon, and ‘every village’, noted a left-wing weekly in the Peloponnese, ‘has its own small band of thugs and terrorists’, who operated independently and often with little co-ordination with each other.⁴¹ The fiercely territorial nature of these militias was demonstrated in

33 Gennadeios Library, K. Tsatsos Archive, Διά να γίνωμεν κράτος.

34 Konstantinos Karamanlis Foundation, K. Tsaldaris Archive, Έκθεσις περί της καταστάσεως εις την βόρεια Ελλάδα/10/3/36/1.

35 This typology and the following discussion are based upon Paul Staniland’s outstanding study of the origins and development of irregular formations during civil wars, P. Staniland, *Networks of Rebellion: Explaining Insurgent Cohesion and Collapse* (Ithaca 2014).

36 P. Apostolidis, *Υπηρεσίες Πληροφοριών στην Ελλάδα* (Athens 2014) 90–5; Elliniko Logotechniko kai Istoriko Archeio, Περί του τρόπου καταδιώξεως των ληστών Ρεντζαίων, Ioannina, File 3/11/1923.

37 GAK, Archeio Vasilikon Anaktoron, Έκθεση Ζαλοκώστα, Folder 439/205, 20/8/1945.

38 G. Priovolos, *Μια αλυσίδα μνημείων: Αχαΐα και Βόρεια Πελοπόννησος 1940–1949* (Athens 2007) 217.

39 V. Stavrogiannopoulos, *Πικρές αναμνήσεις* (Athens 1974) 186.

40 K. Vlachos, *Η αντίσταση στην Λάκκα Σούλι* (Ioannina n.d.) 63.

41 ‘Οι στήλες της τρομοκρατίας’, *Κυνουριακή*, 10/1/1945.

the constant feuds and turf wars between the various groups: ‘militias are not interested in expanding or disseminating propaganda ... they are more interested in poaching each other’s turf and recruits’.⁴²

Patterns of recruitment were accordingly shaped by local realities on the ground. In northern Greece, militias were formed as a response to the activities of Macedonian autonomists who operated from across the Greek-Yugoslav border. These groups were formed along an ethnic axis. The majority of the militias were raised by Pontic Greek refugees who had served in nationalist and pro-Axis groups during the occupation. Initially, these groups concentrated upon defending their villages from raids. However, as they expanded and recruited more men, they undertook offensive operations against Slav-speaking villages.⁴³ These operations were often undertaken with the full knowledge and support of the gendarmerie, which used the militias to ‘cleanse’ the border areas of a potentially dangerous and disloyal minority.⁴⁴

Ethnic tensions were less important further south, where groups were mostly based on kinship ties. Some of these bands were raised by the families and friends of EAM victims who sought to avenge the slaying of their kinsmen.⁴⁵ Other groups were formed as a response to the presence of renegade bands that raided flocks and taxed local landowners.⁴⁶ Finally, a significant number of bands were formed by peasants and local elites who sought to re-assert their authority and gain the upper hand in local rivalries over access to land, resources and pasturage. In the region of Astros and the lowlands of Messinia the first militias were formed by pastoralists from the upland villages of Kynouria who sought to reassert their claim to winter pastures that was severely limited by EAM village councils during the war.⁴⁷

The origins of the militias also had a direct influence upon the forms and patterns of violence employed against dissidents. The ‘white terror’ has been often presented as being a period of brutal, premediated violence that was inspired and co-ordinated by reactionary politicians. Militia violence was brutal but seldom co-ordinated or lethal. In Kynouria, the left-wing press recorded over fifty incidents of violence between March and July 1945. However, only two of these incidents resulted in a fatality. Distinguishing between political and private violence was often difficult. Indeed, in many cases, the actions of militiamen were motivated by personal and local disputes; access to pasturage and disputes over land rights and honour rather than political grievances.⁴⁸ Anecdotal and archival evidence from Epirus and western Greece provides a similar picture.⁴⁹

42 GAK, Archeio Vasilikon Anaktoron, Έκθεση Ζαλοκώστα.

43 Gennadeios Library, F. Dragoumis Archive, Επιστολή, Καστοριά 69.2, 27/3/1945.

44 ASKI, Communist Party Archives, Έκθεση κομματικής οργάνωσης Καστοριάς, 413/69/88.

45 Ch. Tsongas, *Αίμα και δάκρυα: Η πραγματική αλήθεια μιας πολυάνθρωπης τραγωδίας* (Ioannina n.d.) 83–9.

46 Priovolos, *Μια αλυσίδα μνήμης*, 215–17.

47 ‘Η δήθεν τρομοκρατία’, *Ελεύθερη Μεσσηνία*, 11/4/1945.

48 Data collected from *Κυνουριακή*, 1/8/1945–16/5/1946.

49 DIS, Ανωτέρα στρατιωτική διοίκησης Ηπείρου, 1372/A/1, 2/8/1945.

Many attacks took place after heavy drinking in bars and taverns or during festivities when alcohol was consumed in large quantities. The phrase ‘drink had been taken’ appears often in accounts of paramilitary violence. In the town of Gavalou, for instance, local militiamen ‘were drinking heavily, talking and hurling threats ... and when they got drunk as lords they moved to another bar where they came upon an ELAS veteran from Bourlesa’,⁵⁰ the militiamen attacked the man and beat him to a pulp. In the village of Kastania locals attacked a local EAM member after a day of heavy drinking in the local *kafeneion*.⁵¹ The spontaneous nature of this violence was also demonstrated by the militiamen’s choice of weapons. Victims were commonly assaulted with fists, clubs, shepherds’ staffs, knives and stones. Firearms were seldom used and, while victims were badly beaten, killings were relatively rare.⁵²

However, this violence was by no means irrational or merely reactive. Violence served as a calculated warning to left-wing political activists and their supporters. Public beatings in places such as taverns and bars served to terrorize and humiliate opponents, to underline the militiamen’s ability to dominate their community and to convey a particular message to their fellow-villagers. Thus, locals who were accused of denouncing their fellow villagers to ELAS during the occupation had part of their tongue or earlobe cut off. Priests who were known as left-wing sympathizers had their beards shaved⁵³ and women who took an active part in EAM had their heads shaved.⁵⁴

The second group consisted of ‘vanguard organizations’ such as X, the brainchild of the ardent royalist General Georgios Grivas, and EVEN [National Monarchist Youth Union], which was created by a group of senior conservatives allied to Konstantinos Tsaldaris.⁵⁵ These groups were urban-based, had a tight, centralized leadership, a coherent political programme and access to important revenue streams. Nonetheless, they lacked extensive ties to local social networks. As a result, vanguard organizations faced an uphill struggle to recruit and establish their presence in local societies where a multitude of home-grown groups already operated.

During the occupation, X numbered fewer than two hundred armed men who were based in Athens. Grivas tried to expand his group to the northern Peloponnese and central Greece but was unable to secure local allies. The organization was kept alive with the help of well-placed allies in the police and the various collaborationist units. In the spring of 1943, X formed an alliance with RAN [Romylia-Avlon-Nisoi] an ultra-royalist organization created and led by general Konstantinos Ventiris.⁵⁶ This collaboration continued after the war, when Grivas formed an alliance with IDEA [Sacred Union of Greek Officers], a secretive ultra-monarchist organization that was

50 Raptis, *Συμβολή στην ιστορία*, 317–19.

51 Z. Zinelis, *Η δεκαετία του 40 στην Καστανιά και τα γύρω χωριά* (Athens 2016) 111.

52 GAK, Archeio Vasilikon Anaktoron, Σημείωμα υπαρχουσών συμμοριών, Folder 442/421–2.

53 ‘Από την ζωή και την κίνηση της επαρχίας μας’, *Λαός της Ολομπίας*, 20/11/1945.

54 G. Vrachniaris, *Πορεία μέσα στην νύχτα* (Athens 1990) 152.

55 DIS, Δελτίον πληροφοριών εσωτερικού/1372/Α/1, 2/6/1945.

56 DIS, *Αρχεία Εμφυλίου Πολέμου 1944–1949*, VII (Athens 1996) 269–73.

created by Ventiris and other senior officers to support the cause of the monarchy and cleanse the army of left-wing and republican elements.⁵⁷

In the summer of 1945, a number of IDEA officers approached the British and sought their help for a military coup. These entreaties were rejected by the British Military Mission and senior conservatives. Exacerbated by the ‘cowardice’ of the political world, and the unwillingness of the British to back their designs, they forged an alliance with X and other smaller militias.⁵⁸ The purpose of this alliance was to neutralize the Left through a campaign of selective assassination and political intimidation.⁵⁹

Nevertheless, Grivas was no mere puppet. X developed its own political branch which evolved into the Ethnikon Komma Chiton [National Party of Chites]. It also created a youth and workers section and a football team and included a propaganda section run by far-right intellectuals. Grivas and his collaborators presented X as being an alternative to the traditional Right, which they eventually aimed to replace with their own brand of far-right politics. The organization promulgated a distinct ‘third way’ ideology, known as ‘Chitismos’, which combined corporatist, anti-Semitic and ultra-nationalist elements. Grivas saw himself as the saviour of the country and his men as the defenders of the nation.⁶⁰ The organization’s moto was ‘Men of X, be alert, the fatherland is in peril’.⁶¹

In spite of these ties, Grivas faced significant difficulties in expanding his brand of paramilitarism beyond Athens. X was barred from operating in Epirus, which was considered to be the de-facto territory of general Napoleon Zervas,⁶² and Macedonia, where local Pontic Greek militias were wary of any Athens-based groups. The organization even encountered problems in the Athenian districts of Pangrati and Kypseli, where X members were attacked by rival nationalist organizations.⁶³

This situation forced Grivas to turn to the criminal underworld for recruits. Criminal gangs had a long tradition of collusion with the state. In the pre-war period royalist and liberal politicians hired gang members to canvas, threaten political opponents and mobilize the working-class vote in the slums of Athens and Piraeus. Gang members were also used by the police as strike-breakers and informants. This relation continued during the occupation, when gang-leaders played a pivotal role in the formation of various anti-communist militias.⁶⁴ The liberation, and the consequent effort to purge

57 Benaki Museum Archive, S. Venizelos Archive, Εγκύκλιος διαταγή του ΙΔΕΑ σχετικά με τους σκοπούς και τη δράση της οργάνωσης, Folder/009/2, 10/4/1949.

58 Benaki Museum Archive, S. Venizelos Archive, Εγκύκλιος διαταγή.

59 GAK, Archeio Vasilikon Anaktoron, Η εθνική πολιτική ένωση.

60 ‘Ο αεκίνητος σιωνιστικός δάχτυλος’, *Εφημερίς των Χιτών*, 10/5/1948.

61 ‘Το πιστεύω του Χίτου’, *Εφημερίς των Χιτών*, 27/5/1946.

62 DIS. Δελτίον πληροφοριών εσωτερικού Ιουλίου 1945/1372/A/1/2.

63 Elliniko Logotechniko kai Istoriko Archeio, Napoleon Zervas Archive, Επιστολή στον Ν. Κόκκινο, File/3/1.3, 25/10/45.

64 ‘Ο βασιλεύς του αθηναϊκού υποκόσμου Νίκος Κατελάνος’, *Ελευθέρια*, 25/10/1959.

the security services of compromised elements, alarmed the various criminal groups which sought to renew their ties with the government and find new allies in the security establishment.⁶⁵ X approached the gangs with the help of senior conservative politicians and police officers.⁶⁶ The gangs were offered money, weapons and protection from the law in exchange for their help. As a senior police officer noted, 'every thief, conman, smuggler and drug-dealer was given a licence to ply his trade freely if he agreed to co-operate'.⁶⁷

These promises enticed numerous gang leaders to join forces with X and allowed the organization to establish a presence in working-class areas, such as Drapetsona, Peristeri and Kokkinia, that had remained outside its scope during the occupation.⁶⁸ The organization also recruited extensively among the rural poor and the rural lumpenproletariat. The countryside and many working-class districts were swarming with unemployed, destitute youths who lived on the edge of starvation and survived through a combination of part-time work, petty crime, smuggling and begging. The appearance of X bands was seen as a unique opportunity to escape poverty and earn the respect of their community and peers. As an army officer noted, impoverished peasants and labourers saw the acquisition of 'a X identity card as a sensible professional choice ... since they believe that a person who possesses such a [membership] card has the right to bear arms, to abuse whomever he likes and to travel freely to Athens, where he will be wined and dined'.⁶⁹

The presence of a large number of military officers and the availability of a large pool of 'specialists in violence' such as gangsters and bandits allowed X to develop a relatively efficient and well-organized military structure. X was organized along military lines. The organization was divided into three bureaus that were responsible for operations, intelligence and propaganda. X members were issued with identity cards and were divided into sections and platoons that were placed under the command of retired NCOs and police officers.⁷⁰ The organization often operated in tandem with the National Guard and the gendarmerie. Junior leaders in both organizations were rabid anti-communists who believed that the Left had no intention of abiding by the Varkiza accord. Faced with a 'severe shortage of manpower', many officers 'tried to address this problem by working alongside those private citizens who were willing to fight back ... against ELAS'.⁷¹

X militias behaved as a 'state within a state': they set up roadblocks, issued and checked passes and licences, conducted searches for weapons and punished 'moral

65 E. Karellas, *Ιστορίες της κατοχής και του εμφυλίου, από την σκληρή καθημερινότητα εκείνης της εποχής* (Thessaloniki 2003) 108.

66 GAK, Archeio Vasilikon Anaktoron, Σκέψεις επί της πολιτικής καταστάσεως, File 373, 25/2/1946.

67 V. Daras, *Γ38: Βίος και βιώματα ενός απλού ανθρώπου* (Athens 1995) 32.

68 Gigourtakis, *Αυτοβιογραφία*, 90.

69 GAK, Vasilika Anaktora, Αναφορά, File 373/298, 18/7/1945.

70 Raptis, *Συμβολή στην ιστορία*, 377–82.

71 DIS, Αρχεία Εμφυλίου Πολέμου 1944–1949, II (Athens 1996) 76.

transgressors'.⁷² X also kept files and surveilled thousands of citizens who were deemed to be 'politically dangerous'.⁷³ Accordingly, the decision to persecute or kill was often dictated from the top down. A local EVEN leader noted that 'when something needed to be done', such as an assassination or an attack against local leftists, 'we called Giorgos [Tsadoulas], and I told him I wanted so many men in this place to do such and such and warned the police to steer clear as we had business to do'.⁷⁴ In this respect, violence had a clear, long-term political rationale, 'to use our own brand of terrorism to create a climate that would facilitate the re-establishment of a constitutional monarchy'. Violence would 'persuade the republicans and the communists ... to repent and move over to the nationalist side'.⁷⁵

Military operations were meticulously organized. X and EVEN deliberately used excessive and spectacular forms of violence to intimidate and terrorize civilians and political opponents. Paramilitaries would encircle a village and order all civilians to assemble in the central square or the church. Then they would proceed to search the homes of local leftists for weapons and administer public beatings or murder known leftists. Sometimes, the militias would spend three or four days in the same village or town interrogating and torturing suspects. Such raids were conducted by large groups who were often on horseback.⁷⁶ Militias were bands of ten to fifteen men who carried out drive-by shootings and raided left-wing parts of town, where they would attack, beat up and occasionally murder civilians and sexually assault activists.⁷⁷

The use of extreme violence and collusion with the security forces allowed X to expand rapidly across the country. Although an accurate estimate would be difficult, it is likely that X could marshal over three thousand armed men in Athens and an equally large number in the countryside of Attica, Boeotia and Korinthia.⁷⁸ Other groups were also able to broaden their scope and increase their strength. This sudden upsurge had a detrimental impact on the discipline and organization of the militias. Neither Grivas nor his counterparts in the ETHNEE [National Youth of Greece] and EVEN were able to control their men. A senior conservative noted that the 'nationalist movement ... lacks discipline and a unified command.' Militias acted in a 'highly decentralized manner, orders and directives are constantly issued ... however, their implementation rests upon the mood and willingness of the various parties, organizations etc... as a result, the organizations lack a unity of purpose and are therefore unable to mobilize the bulk of the population'.⁷⁹

72 DIS, *Αρχαία Εμφυλίου Πολέμου 1944–1949*, II, 122.

73 Raptis, *Συμβολή στην ιστορία*, 383.

74 M. Kliafa, *Σιωπηλές Φωνές: Μαρτυρίες Θεσσαλών για τον 20^ο αιώνα* (Athens 2000) 136.

75 GAK, *Archeio Vasilikon Anaktoron*, Έκθεση Ζαλοκώστα, File 439/205, 20/8/1945.

76 'Η τρομοκρατική δράση εις τας επαρχίας', *Ελευθερία*, 23/6/1945.

77 K. A. Glendi, *Εφτά χρόνια στην Σπάρτη* (Athens 1979) 137.

78 'Αι γθεσιναι εκδηλώσεις νεαρών μελών της οργανώσεως Χ', *Ελευθερία*, 13/10/1945.

79 GAK, *Archeio Vasilikon Anaktoron*, Η εθνική πολιτική ένωση.

These developments alarmed both the government, which saw many areas of the country slipping out of its control, and several monarchist politicians, who came to believe that Grivas had become a liability. A senior conservative wrote to King George that the militias had become a hindrance to the monarchist cause: 'the contribution of these organizations has fallen far below our expectations.'. He described the organizations as being a 'cancer ... particularly X, which, with the exception of its Athenian chapters, has caused much damage to our cause'.⁸⁰ Such perceptions led the monarchists to withdraw their support and collaborate with the government, which had begun to move against the militias. The gendarmerie and the police dispersed several of the most violent gangs and arrested a large number of X and EVEN activists in Athens, Macedonia and Thessaly.⁸¹

Nevertheless, this was not the end of the road for the militias. Many local militias survived unscathed thanks to their ties with junior politicians, who viewed them as a 'legitimate response' to left-wing provocations and a valuable ally in their factional struggles.⁸² Moreover, neither the conservatives nor the government were willing to destroy the militias root and branch. The ultimate aim of the conservatives was to turn the scattered groups into a disciplined force that would allow them to gain the upper hand in the forthcoming elections and restore the monarchy.

To raise a shadow army: the evolution of the paramilitary world

In the winter of 1945 'the organizations were in a state of decay ... the enthusiasm that drove them during the early days was well and truly gone.'⁸³ X was particularly affected, as it lost hundreds of men who defected to other organizations. The remaining X bands were consumed by rivalries and feuds over rackets and turf.⁸⁴ Local 'parochial' groups fared much better. Although these groups had no contacts in the higher political echelons, they could still count on the support of local politicians and a significant segment of the local population. Their ties to local societies thus allowed them to brave the government onslaught and coalesce into large and disciplined military organizations.

The most characteristic example is ESEA [Union of Fellow-combatants for the National Struggle]. This organization was created by Pontic Greek militiamen who had fought against ELAS during the occupation. These militias remobilized in the summer of 1945 in order to combat the bands of Macedonian Autonomists that targeted their communities. Group-leaders held a series of conferences in the autumn which resulted in the unification of the bands and the creation of ESEA, which made

80 GAK, Archeio Vasilikon Anaktoron, Επιστολή στον Β. Γεώργιον, Folder 439/123, 19/8/1945.

81 Gennadeios Library, K. Tsatsos Archive, Διά να γίνωμεν κράτος.

82 Gennadeios Library, Tsatsos Archive, Επιστολή Κ. Ταλιαδούρου.

83 Benaki Museum Archive, Sofoklis Venizelos Archive, Σημείωμα σχετικά με τις οργανώσεις της Δεξιάς από το 1945 μέχρι σήμερα, File 011/264.

84 Op. cit.

its public debut in October 1945.⁸⁵ ESEA was not just a military group. The organization had its own political branch and a youth section, and it published a newspaper and a newsletter. This allowed ESEA to exercise an undue degree of influence upon local politics. ESEA leaders were able to infiltrate the local administration and capture key positions in local government and aid committees. They used these positions to offer a series of benefits to their members: civil service positions, preferential treatment in the distribution of aid and licences to bear arms. ESEA was thus able to bolster its power and attract a significant following among the local peasantry. Within six months, ESEA had managed to expand across Macedonia and recruit thousands of members.⁸⁶

The expansion of these groups was quietly assisted by a faction of ‘Young Turks’ in the Populist (Monarchist) party. This group of radical politicians was led by Spyros Markezinis, a lawyer from a prominent political family, and the industrialist Theodoros Zalokostas. Both men had strong ties to the palace and IDEA. In the spring of 1945, the two men formed the Epitropi Syndesmou Ethnikou Agonos (Committee for the Coordination of the National Struggle), which was an ultra-conservative organization whose expressed purpose was to restore the monarchy and suppress any efforts by the Left to seize power.⁸⁷ Although this was not the only organization of its kind, the group led by Markezinis stood out for its willingness to use violence against its rivals and internal enemies in the Populist Party.⁸⁸

Markezinis and Zalokostas had disagreed with the government’s anti-militia operations and were convinced that the only way to preclude the re-emergence of the Left and facilitate the victory of the Populist Party and the return of the monarchy was to work in tandem with the militias. The two men initially tried to forge an alliance with X. However, Grivas’ excessive demands, and the growing fragmentation of X, convinced them that such an alliance would be detrimental to their cause. Zalokostas, Mavromichalis and Markezinis turned to the local militias.⁸⁹ Although these groups lacked the contacts and scope of X, they commanded great support among the local peasantry and were able to play a critical role in mobilizing the rural vote in northern Greece, where the Populist Party was traditionally weak. Zalokostas was able to forge an alliance between his group, ESEA, EVEN and various other organizations. The alliance between the conservatives and the militias was formalized on the eve of the elections. The militias agreed to provide their full backing to the conservatives. In return, they requested the inclusion of several of their leaders on the conservatives’ lists. This co-operation ultimately paid off as it led to a landslide victory for the

85 A. Kalliniotis, ‘Οι αντικομμουνιστές καπετάνιοι στη Δυτική Μακεδονία’, in N. Marantzidis (ed.), *Οι άλλοι καπετάνιοι: αντικομμουνιστές ένοπλοι στα χρόνια της κατοχής και του εμφυλίου* (Athens 2008) 240.

86 S. Dordanas, *Η γερμανική στολή στην ναφθαλίνη: επιβιώσεις του δοσιλογισμού στη Μακεδονία, 1945–1974* (Athens 2012) 239–44, K. Konstantinidis, *Στάθης Κωνσταντινίδης, Χασίλας: ένας αλλιώτικος καπετάνιος* (Thessaloniki 2010) 320–9.

87 GAK, Vasilika Anaktora, Έκθεση Μαркеζίνη, File 439/148, 3/8/1945.

88 Op. cit.

89 Op. cit.

conservatives and the return of the Old Guard to parliament. The historian Georgios Dafnis noted that the new parliament 'largely comprised old notables who lacked direction and were incapable of creative work'.⁹⁰

The elections further consolidated the position of the regional militias and helped them to complete the transformation from localized self-defence groups to integrated political-military organizations. In Macedonia, the leader of ESEA and six of his subordinates won seats in the parliament. Militia leaders from Epirus, the Peloponnese and Crete were equally successful.⁹¹ These men formed a small but powerful lobby that pushed the government into channeling funds and weapons to the militias and give them immunity from prosecution. This support allowed other local militias to develop into large private armies. In Laconia, X bands united with the self-defence units created by Panos Katsareas, a retired army officer, to form EAOK [National Anti-communist Hunter Detachments]⁹² while in Crete the various local bands united under the banner of EOK [National Organization of Crete], which was created and led by the local strongman Manolis Badouvas and the Liberal Party MP Giorgis Petrakogiorgis.⁹³

Co-operation between the militias and the state was further intensified by the prospect of the crucial referendum on the monarchy that was scheduled for September 1946. Paramilitaries took an extremely active part in promoting royalism and attacking dissenting republicans and leftists. The referendum was a triumph for the monarchy. The return of King George II coincided with the launch of a left-wing offensive which escalated into an all-out civil war.⁹⁴

The hit-and-run tactics adopted by the guerrillas and the inability of the army to deal with the mobile guerrilla bands convinced several leading conservative politicians that it was time for the paramilitaries to join the fray in a more energetic manner. Zalokostas first introduced this idea in a personal letter to King George II. Zalokostas berated the army, noting that it was incapable of adapting to the exigencies of guerrilla warfare and suggesting that the only way to curtail and eventually smother the rebellion was to turn the paramilitaries into 'counter-guerrilla' bands because 'a shadow army can only be combated by another shadow army'. According to Zalokostas, the only way to combat the insurgents was to act outside the boundaries of the law and engage in 'terrorism, selective assassination and propaganda' in order to break the resolve of pro-insurgent civilians and cut off the guerillas from their supporters. The militias were the ideal force to undertake such activities because their lack of formal ties to the state and army would allow the government to retain plausible deniability.⁹⁵

90 G. Dafnis, *Ta ελληνικά πολιτικά κόμματα 1821–1961* (Athens 1961) 153.

91 Konstantinos Karamanlis Foundation, K. Tsaldaris Archive, Πρακτικόν συνεδριάσεως αρχηγών και καπεταναίων εθνικής αντιστάσεως Αν. Μακεδονίας Θράκης, File 26/8/2/2, 17/8/1947.

92 Konstantinos Karamanlis Foundation, K. Tsaldaris Archive, Δ. Τσιριγώτης προς Κ. Τσαλδάρη/11/1/88/1, 28/7/1947.

93 A. Sanoudakis, *Καπετάν Μπαντουβά απομνημονεύματα* (Heraklion 1979) 401.

94 C. M. Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece 1941–1949* (London 1976) 169.

95 GAK, Vasilika Anaktora, Έκθεση Γ. Ζαλοκώστα, File 439/106, 7/6/1946.

Premier Tsaldaris was initially unwilling to condone such tactics, but he was forced to back down under pressure from Zalokostas, Markezinis, Mavromichalis and the numerous militia-affiliated MPs.⁹⁶ In June 1946 the three men formed the 'Makedoniko Komitato', a secret organization that was tasked with raising and fitting out militias in northern Greece.⁹⁷ The army provided ESEA and other regional militias with a total of 11,500 rifles and automatic weapons in order to raise small mobile detachments that became known as 'Hunter Platoons'.⁹⁸ The activities of these groups were co-ordinated with the help of SED [Association for National Action], a paramilitary 'supreme council' that was funded by the army and presided over by Ventiris.⁹⁹ The army came to a similar arrangement with EOK and EAOK in southern Greece. These organizations were allowed to operate in an independent manner and to keep their structure, leaders and insignias.¹⁰⁰

The government took a step further in September 1946 when it created the MAY [Rural Defence Units). Although the Hunter Platoons were seen as being the spearhead, the MAY were envisioned as being a type of auxiliary rural police that would act as the first line of defence against the guerillas. The MAY were tasked with surveilling local attitudes, locating and neutralizing spies, providing intelligence and protecting key infrastructure and routes from the guerrillas. The government believed that the know-how of the MAY and their ties to the local communities would allow the army to establish a firm foothold and put an end to guerilla incursions in rural areas. Initially, the units were expected to operate under strict military control. However, the plan never came to fruition as there were only a few junior officers and NCOs willing and able to play this role. As a result, the army delegated the command and leadership of the MAY to local conservative notables.¹⁰¹

The performance of the MAY and the Hunters Platoons was extremely uneven. The 'Hunters' lacked discipline and engaged in indiscriminate terrorism against innocent civilians. Moreover, leaders who belonged to different organizations refused to co-operate with each other or follow the instructions of the army.¹⁰² The performance of the MAY was even poorer. For most MAY leaders protection of the community took precedence over compliance with the strategic goals of the army. MAY units would desert when they thought that the army or the insurgents' operations put their families and communities in harm's way and would then join again, asking for

96 GAK, Vasilika Anaktora, Επιστολή, File/473, 27/10/1946.

97 Plakoudas, *The Greek Civil War*, 42–3.

98 Benaki Museum Archive, Sofoklis Venizelos Archive, Έκθεση επί των γεγονότων της Μακεδονίας, File 013/086, 22/09/1946.

99 Benaki Museum Archive, Sofoklis Venizelos Archive, Σημείωμα.

100 Sanoudakis, *Καπέτάν Μπαντουβά*, 401; Konstantinos Karamanlis Foundation, K. Tsaldaris Archive, Δ. Τσιργιώτης προς Κ. Τσαλδάρη.

101 D. Ploumis, *Η ελληνική τραγωδία 1946–1949* (Athens 1973) 43.

102 GAK, Archeio Vasiliko Anaktoron, Σύσκεψη διά το ζήτημα δημοσίας τάξεως, 144A/130, 3/2/1947.

weapons and ammunition when the tide turned.¹⁰³ Feuds between different MAY bands were also common as the various units used their guns to settle local scores and gain the upper hand in feuds over access to land, water and prestige.¹⁰⁴ Some MAY leaders also occasionally collaborated with local guerilla commanders in operations against their rivals.¹⁰⁵

The presence of such attitudes puts into question the image of the militias as brutal predators and unrelenting opponents of the Left. Many memoirists have argued that militias led otherwise peacefully-inclined men to join the insurgents in order to escape persecution. According to this view the violence of the state and the militias left the peasants with two choices: the first was an ignominious end at the hands of the militias, while the second was the 'path of the struggle' and an 'honorable death' in the mountains.¹⁰⁶ However the number of women and men who chose to follow this path was surprisingly small. Many left-wing peasants were willing to work with the militias and blamed the Left for the violence and repression they suffered. A KKE report from central Greece noted that left-wing civilians 'did not trust the guerillas and actually blamed them for the repression and the beatings they suffered at the hands of the gangs ... many of our own supporters took up arms and joined the paramilitaries'.¹⁰⁷ This was far from uncommon. Many militia chiefs were happy to enlist left-wing civilians. Those who were unwilling to join the bands were guaranteed 'protection' and immunity from violence in exchange for a small fee. Some local leaders of various paramilitary organizations such as X and EVEN also sold membership and identity cards to left-wing civilians who could afford to buy them.¹⁰⁸ Many took advantage of this opportunity to refashion themselves as nationalists.¹⁰⁹ Civilians who were unwilling or unable to bribe their way out of trouble could always count on the help of relatives and friends. A senior KKE activist from the uplands of Arta noted in his memoir that he spent six months hiding in the house of his cousin Dinos Papadimitriou, a leading militia leader. His kinsman also helped him to find a job and deal with his legal problems.¹¹⁰ On some occasions MAY leaders and members used violence to protect their kinsmen from rival bands.¹¹¹ Such attitudes led politicians and military leaders to accuse the MAY of conspiring with the enemy and undermining the common struggle against the Left.¹¹²

103 ASKI, Communist Party Archive, Μια ματιά στην ύπαιθρο της Λάρισας, File 418/24/2/63/1946.

104 'Φόνος αρχηγού MAY', *Θάρρος Τρικάλων*, 9/5/1948.

105 ASKI, Communist Party Archive, Έκθεση από Γενάρη–15 Σεπτέμβρη 1947, File 24/2/57.

106 V. Apostolopoulos, *Το χρονικό μιας εποποιίας: Ο ΔΣΕ στη Ρούμελη* (Athens 1995), 15.

107 ASKI, Communist Party Archives, Η κατάσταση στην Στερεά, 24/2/116, 26/10/1946.

108 'Επί μιας ατιμίας', *Λακωνικό Βήμα*, 1/12/1946; 'Ανακοίνωσις', *Εφημερίς των Χιτών*, 19/7/1946.

109 'Νομός Φθιώτιδας', *Εφημερίς των Χιτών*, 30/6/1947.

110 G. Simentzis, *Στα μονοπάτια της ζωής* (Athens 1986) 131.

111 For the importance of kinship ties see K. Georgiadis, *Οδοιπορικό της αντίστασης* (Athens 1980).

112 'Επί μιας ατιμίας', *Λακωνικό Βήμα*, 1/12/1946.

Such attitudes provoked the anger of liberals and conservatives alike and pushed the government to order the dismantling of the militias. The question of the paramilitaries was raised with unusual force at a confidential meeting between the prime minister, party leaders and senior staff officers which took place in February 1947. The senior liberal politicians Georgios Papandreou and Themistoklis Sofoulis urged the immediate dispersal of the bands, arguing that they had not only failed to produce any results but had also made a habit of attacking liberal politicians and candidates.¹¹³ These views caused considerable commotion, particularly among politicians such as the Minister for Public Order Zervas and the Minister of Defence Mavromichalis, who had propagated the use of paramilitary gangs. Zervas accused the Chiefs of Staff of sabotaging the bands' efforts and asked for an increase in their number.¹¹⁴

Zervas' efforts were vindicated, as the government not only declined to disband the militias but also provided him with funds to raise more militias. Zervas' defence of the militias was not completely disinterested. His political appeal was limited to his home region of Epirus. Zervas tried to expand his political influence by using the militias to form a separate security apparatus that would be answerable only to him. In March 1947 Zervas created a 'special command centre' within his ministry which was responsible for co-ordinating militia operations across the country. All positions in the centre were filled by former EDES officers.¹¹⁵

A month later Zervas was provided with funds and weapons to raise nine special gendarmerie regiments that were known as MAD [Defence and Pursuit Units]. The MAD were tasked with policing duties. Their role was to shore up local defences, assist the MAY whenever they came under attack and engage in small-scale military actions, such as patrols and ambushes. Zervas also used a special discretionary fund to form five so-called Free Companies – independent militias whose task was to operate in tandem with the Hunter Platoons and take the war to the guerillas by using aggressive commando tactics. These groups were raised and led by former EDES officers such as Dimitris Galanis and Areistidis Kranias. Both groups were directly accountable to his command centre and were led by his close confidants and political clients.¹¹⁶

The units were recruited on a volunteer basis. Rank and file members received a monthly stipend while their families were granted privileged access to medical attention and government aid.¹¹⁷ As a result, demand for membership was exceedingly high. Local notables and MPs lobbied Zervas to hire their unemployed constituents.¹¹⁸ Zervas was happy to oblige provided they were willing to defect to his

113 GAK, Archeio Vasiliko Anaktoron, Σύσκεψη.

114 Op. cit.

115 K. Antoniou, *Ιστορία Ελληνικής Βασιλικής Χωροφυλακής 1833–1964* (Athens 1964) 2229.

116 Konstantinos Karamanlis Foundation, K. Tsaldaris Archive, Προς τον αρχηγόν του Λαϊκού Κόμματος και αντιπρόεδρον της κυβερνήσεως Κ. Τσαλδαριν, File 22/4/58/1, 25/12/1948.

117 DIS, 1η Στρατιά, μισθοδοσία, 1071/B/2/1, 27/4/1947.

118 DIS, Κατάσταση MAY/ΜΑΔ χωροφυλακής, 8ης Μεραρχίας, Κατόπιν εξερευνήσεως αντ/χου Παπαθανασιάδη, 1071/B/2/1.

party. This led to a huge expansion of the MAD and the Free Companies that grew from a mere 4000 in the spring of 1947 to over 10,000 three months later. This expansion had a detrimental impact on morale and discipline, as these units ended up recruiting men who were completely unsuited for this type of warfare. Many of these troops were below the age limit and most lacked training, while a large number was recruited from the prison population and the ‘criminal element in the slums of Piraeus and Athens’.¹¹⁹

As a result, their military performance was extremely poor. The MAD suffered a series of catastrophic defeats in Laconia, Thessaly and Macedonia, while they were implicated in largescale atrocities against civilians. Morale was so low that in some cases MAD troops ‘deserted after a few weeks, taking home their guns, uniform and equipment which they considered to be their own property’.¹²⁰ Many units abandoned any pretensions of discipline and turned to overt criminal activities. In central Greece, the Free Companies imposed taxes upon all local produce, looted indiscriminately and forced the peasants to pay protection money.¹²¹ Violence between the various groups was constant. In Laconia, clashes broke out between the local Hunter Platoons that were supported by members of the Populist Party after the MAD tried to depose the local mayors and replace them with Zervas-backed candidates.¹²² The situation was even more chaotic in central Greece, where ‘confusion, panic and deep divisions reigned’, as the Free Companies, the MAD and the MAY clashed over control of turf, resources and political posts.¹²³

The situation finally came to a head in the autumn of 1947. After a series of intense meetings with representatives of the American Military Mission, the government agreed to disband all militias except the MAY.¹²⁴ Nevertheless, by this stage, the paramilitaries were too big to fail. The militias numbered well over 40,000 men and had acquired valuable patrons in the army and the political world who fought a desperate rearguard action to keep them in existence.¹²⁵ The alliance between army officers, militia leaders and the Crown bore fruit. The government passed legislation which allowed local prefects to form their own self-defence groups which were rebranded as ‘Dimosiosyntirita Tagmata’ [Publicly-Funded Battalions].¹²⁶ This law allowed the recently demobilized units to continue operating, albeit under a different name. In Laconia the entire force of EAOK was absorbed into two Dimosiosyntirita Battalions that were allowed to operate under their own leaders. A similar process was followed

119 Konstantinos Karamanlis Foundation, K. Tsaldaris Archive, Προς τον αρχηγόν του Λαϊκού Κόμματος και αντιπρόεδρον της κυβέρνησης Κ. Τσαλδάρην, File 22/4/58/1, 25/12/1948.

120 DIS, Κατάστασης MAY/MAD χωροφυλακής.

121 Konstantinos Karamanlis Foundation, K. Tsaldaris Archive, Προς τον αρχηγόν.

122 ‘Συζητείται η νομιμοποίησης των συμμοριών της άκρας δεξιάς στην Πελοπόννησο’, *Ελευθερία*, 25/4/1947.

123 ASKI, Communist Party Archive, Αναφορά, File 24/2/111/α, 10/12/1946.

124 Konstantinos Karamanlis Foundation, K. Tsaldaris Archive, Σημείωμα σχετικών με μείωσιν δυνάμεως χωροφυλακής, File 28/1/36/1, 20/1/1948.

125 Ploumis, *Η ελληνική τραγωδία*, 244.

126 Op. cit., 176.

in other regions. The government thus not only failed to punish the rogue commanders and their political backers but also further embedded the paramilitaries in the state machinery.¹²⁷ This decision was to have far-reaching consequences for the political and social life of the country.

A new class

The Dimosiosyntirita Tagmata and the MAY were relegated to purely defensive tasks and were not allowed to operate outside the boundaries of their district. Their funding was also severely reduced. However, this did not make their influence less intense or pernicious. In fact, as the paramilitaries were increasingly starved of resources, they had to embed their forces more and more in the local economy. Illegal activities were nothing new to them: many bands already operated as mafia-like groups which specialized in providing ‘protection’ to a number of social groups. This change entrenched them even further within the criminal underworld.

The civil war created a world of opportunities for men with the disposition and the know-how of the paramilitaries. Conflict led to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of peasants who languished in makeshift slums and shanty towns. Most of them had no ties to local society and lacked steady income and employment. As a result, they were forced to turn to the informal economy and petty crime in order to supplement their income. Pauperization, the decline of agricultural production and the huge increase in food prices also had a dire effect upon the lives of urban populations which began to rely upon the black market for a series of goods. Falling living standards and the complete lack of policing eventually led to a rapid increase in criminal activities such as drug dealing, prostitution, gambling and smuggling.

EAM’s strict anti-drug policies and the unavailability of the relevant products had diminished the consumption of illegal drugs during the occupation.¹²⁸ The situation changed radically during the civil war. The police forces saw crime as being a secondary problem and focused their activities upon the Left, thus leaving the field open to criminal gangs. This change coincided with the re-opening of the old smuggling routes that brought drugs from Turkey and the Middle East to Europe. Drug-dealers were thus able to start resupplying their old clientele and also to appeal to a new clientele consisting of displaced persons, prostitutes, servicemen and the lumpenproletariat. In the following years, the rise in drug consumption took a cataclysmic turn, with drug-dealing taking place in the centre of Athens in broad daylight.¹²⁹

Drug profits were invested in a number of illegal activities such as prostitution, gambling and night clubs. Volos, a town of less than 40,000 inhabitants, contained

127 *Εφημερίς της Κυβερνήσεως* 309 (1948) 56.

128 ‘Χασίς’, *Ριζοσπάστης* 6/6/1947; ‘Χασίς ο μεγάλος κίνδυνος που κυκλώνει τις φτωχογειτονίες’, *Ριζοσπάστης*, 18/10/1946; Karellas, *Ιστορίες της Κατοχής*, 108.

129 ‘Αθηναϊκή ζωή: τα ναρκωτικά’, *Εμπρός*, 3/3/1949.

more than 200 women of 'ill repute' next to whom lived a whole army of 'protectors, pimps, drug dealers and madams'.¹³⁰ The situation was even worse in Athens, where, according to a national army soldier, it was impossible to sit in a park or a bar without being solicited.¹³¹ Many brothels also functioned as illegal casinos and speakeasies. This situation led the state to take punitive measures against prostitutes and their procurers, shut down hundreds of night-clubs and prohibit gambling.¹³² The prohibition of vice did not lead to a fall in demand. Gambling dens and nightclubs continued to operate, in a clandestine manner.¹³³ Prohibition made policing even more difficult and led to a huge increase in violence. Stabbings, fights and shoot-outs were common both between patrons and vying professionals who sought to expand the scope of their operations or curb those of a rival.¹³⁴

This situation created a niche for the paramilitaries, who embedded themselves deeply into the fabric of the demi-monde first as 'protectors' and then later as providers of illegal services. Militia leaders received a cut of the profits. In exchange, they protected illicit businesses from the law and dealt with rowdy clients and competitors.¹³⁵ Paramilitaries were also heavily involved in the drug trade.¹³⁶ In Thessaly and parts of Macedonia and the Peloponnese, militia-leaders supervised the cultivation of marijuana and opium poppy farms¹³⁷ and the management of numerous hashish dens in provincial cities such as Sparta, Trikala and Preveza, where drug use 'had become an epidemic'.¹³⁸

Militia leaders additionally engaged in usury, smuggling and black marketeering. The EOK supplied guns, often in exchange for drugs, to various criminal gangs in Egypt, Syria and Lebanon, as well as urban gangs and militias in Athens and northern Greece.¹³⁹ This militia was also involved in fraud and graft. In Crete, construction companies had to pay a hefty bribe to militia leaders if they wished to gain a state contract.¹⁴⁰ In the cities of Heraklion, Chania and Rethymno, local shops were forced to purchase coffee, sugar and equipment from militia-approved suppliers and pay a monthly fee to Badouvas' militias.¹⁴¹ Paramilitaries were also heavily involved in the black market,¹⁴² contraband and extortion.¹⁴³ Such activities led local administrators

130 Istoriko Archeio Makedonias, Geniki Dioikisi Voreiou Ellados, Οίκοι Ανοχής, File B26, 22/12/1950.

131 V. Pitarakis, *Εφτά χρόνια φαντάρος 1940–1947* (Athens 1978) 90–5.

132 G. Kairofylas, *Η Αθήνα μετά τον πόλεμο* (Athens 1988) 268.

133 Op. cit.

134 Gigourtakis, *Αυτοβιογραφία*, 55–8.

135 'Νίκος Κατελάνος, ο βασιλεύς του αθηναϊκού υποκόσμου', *Ελευθερία*, 25/10/1958.

136 'Χασίς', *Ριζοσπάστης*, 6/6/1947.

137 'Συλλήψεις', *Θάρρος Τρικάλων*, 11/8/1947.

138 'Από την πόλιν', *Λακωνικό Βήμα*, 5/1/1947.

139 Z. Badouvas, *Ο ήλιος είχε σκοτεινιάσει* (Heraklion 1991) 238–9; Konstantinos Karamanlis Foundation, K. Tsaldaris Archive, Σημείωμα, File 4/12/1, 8/6/1948; Ploumis, *Η ελληνική τραγωδία*, 245, 238–9.

140 'Το υπερκράτος Μπαντουβά', *Εφημερίς των Χιτών*, 21/6/1948.

141 Konstantinos Karamanlis Foundation, K. Tsaldaris Archive, Σημείωμα.

142 'Το έλαιον του Καμαρινέα εισήχθη ήδη λαθραία εις τον Πειραιά', *Ελευθερία*, 30/4/1949.

143 'Κατορθώματα Χιτών', *Ελευθερία*, 19/9/1947.

to describe them as being ‘an even greater threat than the communists’. The governor-general of eastern Macedonia noted that ‘if we are serious about re-imposing the writ of the state in the area we should direct the army to disperse the [ESEA] militias as soon as we finish fighting the communists’.¹⁴⁴

Such operations were not the work of a few rogue commanders. In fact, they were carefully co-ordinated and often involved hundreds of militiamen and civilians. In some cases, the operations were controlled by the local commander of the Dimosiosyntirita. However, there were instances where such operations were led by politicians such as the ESEA-affiliated MP for Serres Pandelis Papadakis¹⁴⁵ as well as mayors, police officers and senior civil servants.¹⁴⁶ Ringleaders and commanders co-operated with local MAY leaders, whom they used in order to collect protection money, threaten businessmen and professionals who failed to comply, and intimidate local officials.¹⁴⁷ Some MAY leaders also tried to set up their own illegal schemes. However, most of them lacked the contacts and the manpower to challenge the supremacy of the Dimosiosyntirita.¹⁴⁸

The militias collaborated with judicial officials, lawyers and local politicians who helped them to launder and invest their money and provided intelligence and protection from prosecution in exchange for a cut of the profits and the assistance of the militias in their private feuds.¹⁴⁹ These networks eventually controlled huge swathes of the local economies and displaced traditional elites; landowners, industrialists and business leaders. A northern Greek daily newspaper noted that ‘the war created an entirely independent and predatory new class of individuals ... who control our fatherland and our economy and act as if they are above the law and the state’.¹⁵⁰

These activities allowed the local militias to bolster their power base by providing a series of social services which the state was unable to provide to the civilian population. The civil war had led to the collapse of the state in rural and working-class areas. Civilians in these areas had no access to services such as education and healthcare and were viewed with suspicion by the gendarmerie and the police force who perceived all peasants as being ‘subversives’ and potential allies of the guerillas. The situation was further exacerbated by the corruption and brutality in the gendarmerie and the police force.¹⁵¹ Peasants were casually assaulted and blackmailed by gendarmes. In several

144 GAK (Rodopis), Archeio Genikis Dioikisis Anatolikis Makedonias Thrakis, Αναφορά, File 10.1/31/02, 23/6/1949.

145 ‘Μια άπίστευτος και ανήκουστος καταγγελία’, *Θάρρος Αράμας*, 22/7/1948.

146 Benaki Museum Archive, S. Venizelos Archive, Επιστολή Απόστολου Κουνουπτή, File 013/215, 18/3/1947.

147 Konstantinos Karamanlis Foundation, K. Tsaldaris Archive, Σημείωμα.

148 Vrachniaris, *Πορεία*, 120.

149 ‘Συζητείται η νομιμοποίησης των συμμοριών’, *Ελευθερία*, 25/4/1947.

150 ‘Εως εδώ’, *Θάρρος Αράμας*, 11/8/1948.

151 Konstantinos Karamanlis Foundation, K. Tsaldaris Archive, Βουλευταί Βορείου Ελλάδος προς πρόεδρον της κυβέρνησης κ. Θ. Σοφούλην, File 28/5/33/1, 1/9/1948.

cases, local communities petitioned the local army command to remove the gendarmerie altogether and provide them with guns in order to raise a self-defence group ‘that would allow us to protect our families and properties’.¹⁵²

In many areas, peasants preferred to turn for help to militia leaders rather than the state. Although militia leaders were violent and predatory, they also shared cultural ties and codes with the peasants. The paramilitaries thus became the peasants’ first port of call when dealing with the authorities. Civilians turned to them to expedite the approval of a business licence, help quash a warrant and get access to medical care and higher education. Militiamen also played a critical role in assisting displaced persons and refugees from their home regions with accommodation, state aid and protection from local civilians.¹⁵³ Finally, militias provided swift and brutal conflict resolution. Peasants would often turn to a militia leader to retrieve stolen property, discipline a feral youth or an unfaithful spouse, and punish local ‘deviants’; child molesters, paedophiles and petty thieves.¹⁵⁴

These activities allowed the militia leaders to command wide support from local communities and eventually emerge as independent political players. The case of Tsau Andon, also known as Antonis Fosteridis, presents a characteristic example. Fosteridis was a fugitive from justice who formed a small but effective resistance organization during the occupation in eastern Macedonia. In late 1945, Fosteridis raised a small local militia which served as the armed branch of the ultra-nationalist party of general Stylianos Gonatas. Fosteridis was thus able to forge contacts with senior conservatives and members of the royal family.¹⁵⁵ These contacts allowed Fosteridis to break away from Gonatas and form his own independent political organization in the areas of eastern Macedonia and Thrace.¹⁵⁶ Fosteridis was also allowed to raise his own independent militia which, in 1948, joined the Dimosiosyntirita Tagmata.¹⁵⁷

Fosteridis had total control of his territory. According to the local governor general, ‘he forced all local teenagers to join his youth organization’, appropriated public land which he then distributed to his followers, and he used intimidation and corruption to replace civil servants with his own men. Fosteridis did not rely solely upon fear. He presented himself as the protector of the local peasantry from the Athenian elites ‘who had dominated and pushed around Macedonians for far too long’. Fosteridis proclaimed to the peasantry that his party would rid the area of the politicians and civil servants from ‘Old Greece’ and instead hire local civilians in their place. This rhetoric alarmed some local officials, who protested that Fosteridis’ rhetoric ‘has more than a passing resemblance to the rhetoric of the communists’.¹⁵⁸

152 DIS, Προς την 83ήν στρατιωτική περιοχή, 1071/B/2/1, 19/05/1947.

153 D. Karakatsianis, *Η Μάνη στον πόλεμο: Κατοχή, αντίσταση και εμφύλιος*, PhD thesis, University of Athens, 2010, 340–3.

154 ‘Ο Χίτης της Αβιάς’, *Ελευθερία*, 22/5/1948, D. Stoufis, *Ενθουμήσεις* (Kamarina 2005) 18–19.

155 ‘Συνάντησις Διαδόχου και Φωστεριδῆ’, *Ελευθερία*, 17/1/1947.

156 Konstantinos Karamanlis Foundation, K. Tsaldaris Archive, Εμπιστευτικό, File 31/1/1, 2/1/1948.

157 ‘Ίδρύεται τάγμα χωροφυλακής με έδρα την Δράμα’, *Θάρρος Δράμας*, 18/5/1948.

158 GAK (Rodopis), Archeio Genikis Dioikisios Anatolikis Makedonias Thrakis, Αναφορά.

Nevertheless, neither Fosteridis nor his counterparts in southern Greece were in any way plotting to subvert the state. Militia leaders used these activities to augment their social status and forge deals with local and national authorities that then allowed them to move from the margins to the centre of the political stage. Fosteridis was elected as a member of parliament in 1952 and he continued to exercise a huge political influence in northern Greek politics for the next two decades. Other militia leaders followed a similar trajectory.¹⁵⁹ The nexus between the militias, the security services and the political world remained in place well into the late 1970s. In the aftermath of the war, the MAY were refashioned as the TEA [National Guard Defence Battalions], which were a home-guard force. The nominal purpose of the TEA was to serve as a first line of defence in case of war. Nonetheless, their real target was the ‘internal enemy’; the Left, minorities and the trade unions. The TEA were involved in suppressing dissent, intimidating left-wingers and trade unionists and also monitoring political attitudes in the rural areas. The presence of these groups had a detrimental effect upon the form and quality of political life and played a pivotal role in derailing democracy and the advent of the military junta in 1967.

Conclusion

Existing studies have seen the post-war state as being a unified actor and described the ‘reconstruction of the right-wing state’ in terms of a top-down process that was carefully planned and implemented by the military and political elite.¹⁶⁰ Nevertheless, as this article has demonstrated, the rise of the militias was not the work of an all-powerful and vindictive state. The militias were grass-roots organizations raised and funded by local elites and ordinary peasants who believed that the state was unable to deal with the threat posed by the Left and address the problems that marred the reconstruction of the state and society; poverty, a lack of resources and crime.

The relationship between the state and the militias was contentious from the very beginning. Militias were distrustful of the state and the politicians, whom they viewed as weak and corrupt. Such feelings were reciprocated by many state officials, who saw the militiamen as no different to the numerous bandit gangs that infested the countryside. However, they were brought together by self-interest and fear of the Left. The bands were aware that they could not operate without political protection, while the political world was in need of their services in the pending elections. This alliance facilitated a landslide victory for the conservatives and the triumphant return of the monarchy. At the same time, it tipped the balance in favour of the paramilitaries.

159 V. Tzoukas and N. Vafeas, ‘Από την Αντίσταση στη Βουλή: πρώην εδεσίτες στα κοινοβουλευτικά έδρανα’, *Δοκίμης* 16 (2010) 349–66.

160 D. Close, ‘The reconstruction of the right-wing state’, in D. Close (ed.), *The Greek Civil War 1943–1950: Studies in Polarization* (London 1993) 156–89.

Local militias were able to coalesce into ‘integrated’ political military organizations that played an increasingly important role in local political affairs.

The collaboration between the state and the militias became even closer after a string of military setbacks at the hands of left-wing insurgents. Political and military leaders believed that the only way to combat the insurgency was to fund and arm counter-gangs. This effort backfired as the authorities were unable to co-ordinate the activities of the militias or discipline the paramilitaries, who were more interested in lining their pockets and settling scores than fighting for King and country. This anarchy was further facilitated by the disagreements between the military, Zervas and Mavromichalis, who used these formations to further their own agendas. The state made a last effort to control the militias by cutting their funding and relegating them to local policing duties. This change did not to curb the lawlessness of the paramilitaries or loosen their hold upon local societies. Militias used their ties to the security service and military know-how in order to seize control of the thriving illicit economies and to bolster their power base through a combination of threats, bribes and social work.

Anti-communist networks did not lose their salience in the post-war period. Insecurity, lack of employment and endemic poverty allowed the militias to retain their hold over local societies. Anti-communist networks provided access to good jobs, prestige and a chance for social mobility to otherwise marginalized individuals and constituencies. This alliance not only helped to complete the process of nation-building by facilitating the inclusion of these groups into the national body politic but also expedited a massive shift in political attitudes. Peasants in the so-called New Lands had traditionally voted for the Liberal Party.¹⁶¹ The co-operation between the paramilitaries and the Conservatives allowed the latter to put down roots in communities that were traditionally hostile to them and form patronage networks that persist to this day.

Nevertheless, the inclusion of the paramilitaries within the political system had other more malignant effects in political and policing practices. The collusion between the state, the militias and law enforcement led to the institutionalization of extra-legal practices against political opponents and the emergence of a ‘custodian’ mentality among members of the military and the security services. Militias and their backers had a lingering distrust of democracy and its institutions, which they saw as an obstacle in the fight against communism, and they believed that they were entitled to act decisively if they felt the state was under threat. However, their opposition was not entirely disinterested. The leaders and rank-and-file members of this alliance were keenly aware that their wellbeing depended upon their ability to control criminality and dispense state patronage to their political clients and followers. The normalization of politics

161 For the formation of inter-war political allegiances and cleavages in refugee communities see G. Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic: Social Coalitions and Party Strategies in Greece, 1922–1936* (Berkeley 1983).

posed an existential threat to the militias and their patrons, who became increasingly hostile towards any efforts to construct a more inclusive polity and end politically based persecution. Such mentalities had a devastating impact upon efforts towards democratization and contributed significantly to the derailing of democracy in the 1960s and the advent of the military junta.

In Memoriam

Ruth Juliana Macrides (1 October 1949–27 April 2019)

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of Ruth Macrides. Ruth had been editor (with Peter Mackridge) of *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* since 2005. She joined the University of Birmingham as a half-time lecturer in 1994. She was appointed to a full-time post at Birmingham in 2000, and in 2013 she became Reader in Byzantine Studies. She was still in post at the time of her death. Till the last, she was giving lectures, speaking at conferences and examining theses in various countries.

Her research centred on the Palaiologan period (thirteenth to fifteenth centuries). Her chief publications were *George Akropolites: The History: Introduction, Translation and Commentary* (2007) and (with Joseph Munitiz and Dimitar Angelov), *Pseudo-Kodinos, the Constantinopolitan Court: Offices and Ceremonies* (2013).

She was awarded a visiting fellowship at the School of Historical Studies at Princeton University for the academic year 2019–20, which she did not live to enjoy. Ruth's unexpected death has robbed us of a much-loved colleague. On BMGS she was the perfect collaborator. She was a meticulous editor of other people's work, determined to preserve the highest standards of scholarship.

The editorial board

violence and Nilsson discusses erotic tactility. Here my criticism concerns the contribution of Tirnanic, which has some weaknesses.

First, the author draws conclusions that are not supported by Byzantine evidence. For example, it is stated that fire was “one of the four elements that the Byzantines believed their world consisted of” (p.213). Instead of giving a reference to a Byzantine text in support of this statement, the author talks about Plato’s approach to the elements. Second, there are a number of instances where Tirnanic talks about an ancient author’s theory without giving any reference to the source. She states, for instance, that “for Aristotle touch is the most ‘imperfect’ of senses”. Yet the validity of this statement cannot be substantiated, since there is no reference to the Aristotelian work(s) where this is written. Third, Tirnanic’s analysis is based exclusively on English translations of sources, which are not always based on the editions she mentions. Furthermore, there are cases in which the names of the modern translators are not given. Finally, the author draws parallels that are not always relevant. For instance, she concludes her article by likening the healing saint to the Byzantine emperor “who causes corporal pain in the condemned in order to heal the [...] empire” (p.237).

In the last part of the volume, Webb explores the use of rhetoric to arouse the senses. Lieber is also interested in the interrelationship between rhetoric and senses, but her sources are Jewish. Plested investigates the spiritual senses in theological literature. All in all, one would have liked to see more interaction between the chapters, either in the same part or in different ones. There is also a certain amount of inconsistency in, for example, references to primary sources.

Despite some weaknesses, which are to be expected in a large interdisciplinary volume, the editors should be congratulated for their excellent work and for introducing Byzantinists to sensory studies.

Stavroula Constantinou
University of Cyprus

S. Kaklamanis and A. Kalokairinos (eds.), *Χαρτογραφώντας τη δημόδη λογοτεχνία (12ος–17ος αι.): Πρακτικά του 7ου Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου Neograeca Medii Aevi*. Heraklion: Etairia Kritikon Istorikon Meleton, 2017. Pp. xiv, 670.
DOI:[10.1017/byz.2019.4](https://doi.org/10.1017/byz.2019.4)

The conference series “Neograeca Medii Aevi” was born in Cologne in 1986, thanks to the initiative and guiding hand of Hans Eideneier. To judge from the number of participants and the range of countries then represented, there was a demand for a conference which focused on literary texts in vernacular (i.e. non-archaizing) Greek, dating from the 12th to the 17th centuries, as a distinct area of Greek studies. There was an obvious affinity with the lexicon of Emmanouil Kriaras, the first volume of which had appeared in 1968, and which covers a similar time-span and textual

corpus, stretching roughly from *Digenis Akritis* to Bounialis.¹ Subsequent conferences were held in Venice (1991), Vitoria (1994) and Nicosia (1997). In 1999 a smaller working group convened for a “συμπόσιόπουλον” in Hamburg, focusing on editorial theory and practice in relation to such texts. The series continued in Oxford (2000), Ioannina (2005) and Heraklion (2012). The proceedings of all the conferences have been published, those of the 7th being one of the most substantial in terms of page numbers and one of the richest in breadth and quality of the contributions; of the 46 papers, four are in Italian, two in English, one in French, and the remainder in Greek.

In his introduction Stefanos Kaklamanis offers a definition of the field, sets out the main axes of the conference, and discusses the “mapping” of textual production referred to in the title.² Which works belong to the cultural environment of Constantinople and its immediate surroundings? Which to the wider Hellenic periphery, in which Cyprus, Rhodes and Crete gradually develop their own cultural identities, particularly after 1453? This mapping, he suggests, should also take into account, among other factors, genre preferences, subject matter, aesthetics, and world-view. Kaklamanis effectively sets the scene, offering a number of theses for further discussion as this relatively new field establishes its intellectual territory. The papers included in the volume indicate, however, that at this stage: 1) the thematics of Neograeca Medii Aevi are somewhat broader than the original definition (and that is to be welcomed); 2) chronological limits appear to be negotiable; and 3) many questions relating to the language and style of the texts – most importantly, perhaps, the terminology used to describe the different registers – remain unresolved.

Issues of language in fact figure in a number of the contributions to this volume, though they tend to be ancillary to other matters rather than central topics discussed with the use of linguistic terminology and methodologies. A notable exception is the paper by Marina Detoraki, who discusses the *Λειμωνάριον* of Ioannes Moschos, a text written down in the early 7th century and often cited in histories of Greek (Browning, for example, states that it is “fairly representative of the spoken Greek of the sixth century”,³ and it has even been claimed that it marks the beginning of Modern Greek). Detoraki reminds us that there is no reliable edition of the work, the *Patrologia Graeca* edition being full of misreadings and arbitrary amendments (as Philip Pattenden had shown⁴), while the best manuscript dates from the 12th century. Yet it is still used as linguistic “evidence” for the 6th/7th century by scholars who should know better (including a contribution in this volume). Potentially interesting work is being done on early grammars of Modern Greek: those of

1 E. Kriaras, *Λεξικό της μεσαιωνικής ελληνικής δημόδους γραμματείας (1100–1669)*. Volume 21, now published by the Centre for the Greek Language under the direction of I. N. Kazazis, appeared in 2019, reaching the lemma *συνεορτάζω*.

2 A similar “mapping” of the contributors seems unfortunately to have been overlooked. No institutional affiliations or biographical data are given. Abstracts and keywords would also have been welcome additions.

3 R. Browning, *Medieval and Modern Greek*. 2nd edition. Cambridge 1983, p. 35.

4 P. Pattenden, “The text of the *Pratum Spirituale*”, *Journal of Theological Studies* 26 (1975), 38–54.

Sofianos, Germano, Portius and Mitrofanis are discussed by M. Karabini-Giatrou, and that of Romanos Nikiforou by N. Liosis, but neither presentation offers much that is new. It is sad to see again the assertion that Sofianos entitled his work *Γραμματική της κοινής των Ελλήνων γλώσσης* when in fact this title was invented by Émile Legrand.

The majority of the papers relate to literary texts, as one would expect, but there is space here to mention only a few that make major contributions to the field. Elizabeth Jeffreys extends and elaborates her arguments, first aired in 2009, for a re-dating of the Palaeologan romances. She argues cogently that the *War of Troy* was produced between 1267 and 1281, as part of the ideological programme of the Frankish rulers of Morea, and then acted as a spur and model for *Livistros* and other romances, created shortly after in a Byzantine context.

Several new editions of texts are announced or promised. Cristiano Luciani proposes a new edition of the *Exploits of Merkourios Bouas*, which he presumably intends as an improvement on the recent work of Roberta Angiolillo⁵ (as well as correcting Sathas's numerous errors), and he stresses the need for a detailed historical introduction, to include new biographical information about the author Tzane Koronaios and his Greek-Albanian hero Bua. The Cretan poet Stefanos Sachlikis is in the spotlight, thanks to the invaluable *Nachlass* of Nikos Panagiotakis. In 2015 Giannis Mavromatis published a χρηστική έκδοση of all the poems, together with a long essay by Panagiotakis which serves as introduction.⁶ In the present volume, Mavromatis and Arnold van Gemert discuss their forthcoming synoptic edition of all the manuscripts, drawing particular attention to the fact that, late in life, Sachlikis seems to have embarked on a revision of all his poems but failed to complete it. Sachlikis is also the subject of Tina Lendari's contribution, a subtle engagement with the sensory world as depicted in the poems, the presence of the city and society, and the sense of movement that invigorates Sachlikis's work. On texts of a very different kind, Francesca Paola Vuturo stresses the need for an edition of the prose texts of Nilos Nathanail Bertos, which survive in 20 manuscripts, while Stylianos Lampakis presents an exemplary re-edition of the so-called Cretan *Apocalypse of the Virgin*, preceded by an informative discussion of the sources and dating.

Cretan Renaissance literature and its cultural context is the subject of a clutch of papers, which I can mention only briefly. First, we are given a reasoned explanation for the lack of evidence to connect the Cretan academies with vernacular literature (M. Paschalis); traditional scholarly tools are employed to investigate which version of the *Pastor fido* served as the model for the Cretan *Πιστικός βοσκός* (E. Papadaki); while a new "correspondence" is proposed for the *Βοσκοπούλα*, namely a well-known *contrasto* by the 13th-century poet Cielo d'Alcamo (M. Pafiti). The plays of Chortatsis receive attention from a number of scholars, from a satisfying variety of perspectives:

5 R. Angiolillo, *Tzane Koroneos, Le Gesta di Mercurio Bua*. Alessandria 2013.

6 G. Mavromatis & N. M. Panagiotakis (eds.), Στέφανος Σαχλίκης, *Τὰ ποιήματα. Χρηστική έκδοση με βάση καὶ τὰ τρία χειρόγραφα*. Φιλολογική ἐπιμέλεια, πρόλογος, εἰσαγωγή καὶ γλωσσάριο. Athens 2015.

the structure and models of *Panoria* (Maria-Christiana Passou); the manuscript and printed witnesses of *Erofili* (Eleni Lampaki); a challenging investigation of the meaning of “τραγωδία” for Chortatsis (G. Kallinis); and a close reading of passages alluding to the theme of fate in *Erofili* and *Erotokritos* (Natalia Deliyannaki). On the latter work three papers stand out for their originality, capitalizing on previous scholarship in illuminating ways: the content and poetics of the “hidden” songs of Rotokritos which have to be “unearthed” from within the text (M. Pieris); the figure of the Lord of Patras in the joust (Tassoula Markomihelaki); and a thorough investigation of echoes of the Escorial *Digenis Akritis* in Kornaros’s romance (Marina Rodosthenous-Balafa).

Two contributions on unknown or neglected texts of the 17th century are particularly noteworthy. Previously, the Zakynthian Theodoros Montseleze was known only as the author of a play, *Εγγένα*, printed in 1646. The discovery of another text by him, a historical narrative in verse relating the exploits of Lazzaro Mocenigo during the Turco-Venetian war of 1645–69, is announced here by Eirini Gergatsouli. We await with interest the edition of the text and further historical and prosopographical information. The second neglected (but certainly not unknown) text is the *Τέχνη ρητορική* of Frangiskos Skoufos, published in Venice in 1681 but yet to be accorded a modern edition. In her presentation Gaia Zaccagni claims that the text exhibits an innovative use of language as well as elements of Cretan dialect. Alongside its interest as a didactic work, it clearly merits a detailed linguistic study.

These brief comments by no means cover the whole thematic range of the volume, which also extends into early printing, metrics, documents, satire, Latin-script manuscripts, folk song, and 19th-century scholarship. It concludes with a tribute to Michalis Lassithiotakis (1955–2012), who died just a few months before the conference and indeed was to be one of the speakers. Lassithiotakis contributed greatly to the study of vernacular Greek literature, from medieval to early modern, especially through his comparative studies with Italian and French works and his research on Greek responses to Petrarchism. A number of his articles are brought together in a substantial book that appeared in 2010.⁷

Most conference proceedings are a mixed bag, and this volume is no exception. However, the great majority of the contributions advance their subject in distinctive and challenging ways, and provide essential points of reference for future research. We can affirm that “Neograeca Medii Aevi” is established both as a concept and as a distinct field of study, but with the flexibility to benefit from connections, comparisons and contextualizations in relation to other fields, periods and disciplines.

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7 M. Lassithiotakis, *Littérature et culture de la Crète vénitienne*. Paris – Athens 2010.

but not mistakes, the conjectures are rare. Special attention is given to punctuation. There are three *apparati*: *apparatus locorum citatorum* (from Eustathios' work), *apparatus fontium et locorum parallelorum*, and *apparatus criticus*.

All that remains is to go into the reading, often tiring and sometimes boring but always useful, of the immense series of Eustathios' *parekbolai* on Homer's *Odyssey* (*Rhapsodies A-B*), preceded by his 'preface'. The text edition is excellent. The clear English translation facing the Greek text undoubtedly helps the reader.

The results of a modern edition of the first part of the *Commentary on the Odyssey*, parallel to that of the *Commentary on the Iliad* by M. van der Valk (1971–1987), are truly promising. Even with the awareness that the preparation of the *Commentary* in its entirety will take a long time, the hope of seeing it one day complete now appears to be concrete.

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Susan Ashbrook Harvey and Margaret Mullett (eds.), *Knowing Bodies, Passionate Souls: Sense Perceptions in Byzantium*. Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2017. Pp. 330.
DOI:[10.1017/byz.2019.3](https://doi.org/10.1017/byz.2019.3)

This volume constitutes a feast for most senses. The reader's eye is delighted by the beautiful book with the high quality printing and colour illustrations. The online accessed companion audio file is a pleasure for the ears. While turning the pages, one feels the touch of and smells the expensive paper. *Knowing Bodies, Passionate Souls* is the amplified outcome of the homonymous symposium organized at Dumbarton Oaks in 2014 by the editors.

The volume is timely and relevant, responding to the early twenty-first century "sensory turn" in the social sciences and humanities, heralded by David Howes ("Charting the Sensorial Revolution", *Senses and Society* 1.1 [2006]: 113–128). Surprisingly, neither Howes' works on the senses or those of Constance Classen, who examines the sensorium across history and cultures, are well represented in the volume's bibliography. Nevertheless, the volume is an extremely important addition to Byzantine studies in which, apart from sight, the senses have attracted little attention.

Knowing Bodies, Passionate Souls has six thematic parts framed by an introduction and a general index. The first five parts are organized around the five senses ("Sight", "Hearing", "Smell", "Taste" and "Touch") while the last part entitled "The Sensorium" includes contributions that are not devoted to a particular sense. All together, this is a substantive volume, with sixteen chapters on topics including literary studies, history, art history, architecture, archaeology, musicology and theology. The volume's scholarship is in general of high quality. I only have a few quibbles here and there.

In the introduction, the editors point out the importance of the senses in Byzantine culture, remarking also that “Byzantinists have been slow to look at [...] the senses” (p.1).¹ While explaining the volume’s structure, the editors state that “given the study of visuality in Byzantium is far in advance of the study of any of the other senses, we chose to start [...] with a pair of papers on sight in the context of display” (p.5). Yet, this statement seems to contradict a previous one that critiques earlier scholarship on the sight for not “embrac[ing] phenomenological approaches” (p.1). Furthermore, the first two chapters (Peers and Bagnoli), which are grouped under “Sight”, concentrate on other senses rather than sight while the second chapter does not concern Byzantine senses, but sensation in the Late Middle Ages.

Peers argues that a better understanding of Byzantine objects cannot be achieved unless scholars accept that objects have their own “special feelings” (p.30). Bagnoli shows convincingly that for medieval people touch, hearing and smell were more significant than sight. The first chapter of the second part (“Hearing”) focuses on sonic environments in architectural contexts: the monastery and the church (Papalexandrou). The next chapter (Antonopoulos) examines *kalophonia* in relation to *non-kalophonic* forms. Finally, Haines-Eitzen investigates the presence of desert silence in early monastic literature.

There are some misconceptions regarding the sources used by the last author to formulate her argument. For example, according to Haines-Eitzen “the most cacophonous late ancient monastic text [...] is *The Life of Antony*” (p.113). This conclusion is based on a single episode, which does not take place in the desert, as Haines-Eitzen seems to believe, but in the cemetery situated at some distance from Antony’s village where he lives during the first stage of his ascetic life. Haines-Eitzen claims also that “there is very little *hesychia*” in Antony’s Life. Again, this is not accurate. When Antony reaches high levels of spirituality, having completely defeated the devil’s attacks, he spends twenty years enclosed in his cell, practicing hesychia.

However interesting and informative, the first two chapters of the third part (“Smell”) are beyond the scope of a volume that is dedicated to sense perceptions in Byzantium (Ruggles, “Scent, Sound, and the Senses in Islamic Gardens of Al-Andalus” and Rojas and Sergueenkova “The Smell of Time: Olfactory Associations with the Past in Premodern Greece”). Harvey’s chapter investigates the importance of fragrant oil in Byzantine culture.

In the next part (“Taste”), Arentzen shows how Romanos’ hymns teach the faithful to experience the Bible through taste. Hedstrom offers the first archaeology of early monastic taste. In what follows, Caseau, Tirnanic and Nilsson explore the sense of touch. Caseau examines the touch of the pious Christian, Tirnanic focuses on that of

1 Surprisingly, while the Introduction appears to have been written by both editors at some point the reader gets the impression that it is written by one of them. For example, at page 4 we read “I offer one brief example here”.

violence and Nilsson discusses erotic tactility. Here my criticism concerns the contribution of Tirnanic, which has some weaknesses.

First, the author draws conclusions that are not supported by Byzantine evidence. For example, it is stated that fire was “one of the four elements that the Byzantines believed their world consisted of” (p.213). Instead of giving a reference to a Byzantine text in support of this statement, the author talks about Plato’s approach to the elements. Second, there are a number of instances where Tirnanic talks about an ancient author’s theory without giving any reference to the source. She states, for instance, that “for Aristotle touch is the most ‘imperfect’ of senses”. Yet the validity of this statement cannot be substantiated, since there is no reference to the Aristotelian work(s) where this is written. Third, Tirnanic’s analysis is based exclusively on English translations of sources, which are not always based on the editions she mentions. Furthermore, there are cases in which the names of the modern translators are not given. Finally, the author draws parallels that are not always relevant. For instance, she concludes her article by likening the healing saint to the Byzantine emperor “who causes corporal pain in the condemned in order to heal the [...] empire” (p.237).

In the last part of the volume, Webb explores the use of rhetoric to arouse the senses. Lieber is also interested in the interrelationship between rhetoric and senses, but her sources are Jewish. Plested investigates the spiritual senses in theological literature. All in all, one would have liked to see more interaction between the chapters, either in the same part or in different ones. There is also a certain amount of inconsistency in, for example, references to primary sources.

Despite some weaknesses, which are to be expected in a large interdisciplinary volume, the editors should be congratulated for their excellent work and for introducing Byzantinists to sensory studies.

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S. Kaklamanis and A. Kalokairinos (eds.), *Χαρτογραφώντας τη δημόδη λογοτεχνία (12ος–17ος αι.): Πρακτικά του 7ου Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου Neograeca Medii Aevi*. Heraklion: Etairia Kritikon Istorikon Meleton, 2017. Pp. xiv, 670.
DOI:[10.1017/byz.2019.4](https://doi.org/10.1017/byz.2019.4)

The conference series “Neograeca Medii Aevi” was born in Cologne in 1986, thanks to the initiative and guiding hand of Hans Eideneier. To judge from the number of participants and the range of countries then represented, there was a demand for a conference which focused on literary texts in vernacular (i.e. non-archaizing) Greek, dating from the 12th to the 17th centuries, as a distinct area of Greek studies. There was an obvious affinity with the lexicon of Emmanouil Kriaras, the first volume of which had appeared in 1968, and which covers a similar time-span and textual

Telling stories with pictures: narrative in middle and late Byzantine monumental painting*

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This article explores the narrative strategies employed in the monumental painting of the middle and late Byzantine period and considers whether the different methods of narration and the degree of narrativity can reveal anything about the function of the work, its creators, its audience and finally its period; in other words whether a narratological approach to visual representation could be a tool for analysing a work of art in socio-historical terms. This is determined firstly by identifying similar narrative structures in contemporary literature and secondly by looking for information on how contemporary viewers ‘read’ the ‘story’ in monumental narrative paintings.

Keywords: Visual narrative; Byzantine monumental painting; iconography; Palaiologan romances; Komnenian novels

When Kurt Weitzmann studied the iconography of the Lamentation he saw it as the final episode in a series of scenes depicting the events following the Descent from the Cross: Joseph of Arimathea and Nikodemos carrying the dead Christ, then the myrrhophores and the Virgin joining the procession and finally all the figures stopping short of the open tomb, sitting on the ground and lamenting over Christ’s body in a highly charged emotional scene. Weitzmann identified all the phases of the subject found in illustrated manuscripts before the scene appeared in monumental art in the mid-twelfth century.¹ Nowadays, thanks to Henry Maguire’s research, we know that

* This study was first presented at the 2016 Dumbarton Oaks Byzantine Studies Colloquium entitled ‘Monumental Painting in Byzantium and Beyond: New Perspectives’. I would like to thank the anonymous readers of *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* for their insightful comments and Valerie Nunn for the English translation.

1 Kurt Weitzmann, ‘The origin of the threnos’, in *De artibus opuscula XL. Essays in Honor of Erwin Panofsky*, I (New York 1961) 476–90.

homilies on the Virgin's lament, which were included in Good Friday services from the eleventh century onwards, played a crucial role in the creation of this theme.²

I refer to the example of the Lamentation because the two approaches mentioned above are the ones that have for the most part dominated the study of visual narrative in Byzantine monumental art. The former, which could be defined as descriptive and classificatory, analyses images according to iconographic types, seeking their archetypes and recording their development, while the latter, often developed in response to the taxonomical approach, looks for the textual sources of the images with the aim of understanding their intrinsic meaning or content.³ It is also a fact that nowadays in iconographical analyses of Byzantine monumental painting scholars have largely turned to looking for the text behind the image, while they have paid little attention to the question of how an image or a series of images, a narrative cycle, retells and represents a text.⁴ Attempts to answer this question have mainly relied on the taxonomical methodology, which was basically elaborated by Weitzmann in his studies on pictorial narrative in the manuscripts of the early Christian and Byzantine periods.⁵ As a result, visual storytelling in monumental painting has been seen as dependent on book illustration and lengthy narrative cycles unfolding across church walls have usually been attributed to the copying of some, often hypothetical, painted manuscript.⁶

Moreover, Weitzmann's typological approach subsumed an evolutionary model, i.e. the transition from a narrative mode that uses separate images representing a single moment of a story to a cyclic method of narration with pictures showing successive

2 Henry Maguire, 'The depiction of sorrow in middle Byzantine art', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 31 (1977), 123–74 (145, 161ff.); idem, *Art and Eloquence in Byzantium* (Princeton N.J. 1981) 97–108.

3 Unfortunately to date there is no comprehensive historiography of research into Byzantine art, and the few brief articles on the subject give a rather restricted picture as they focus on the work of English-speaking academics, see L. Brubaker, 'Critical approaches to art history', in E. Jeffreys, J. Haldon, R. Cormack (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies* (Oxford 2008) 59–66, with earlier bibliography. For a brief historiographical presentation of the study of iconography, see the relevant chapter by K. Corrigan in *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*, 67–76.

4 An exception to this rule is the article by H. Maguire, 'Two modes of narration in Byzantine art', in C. Moss, K. Kiefer (eds.), *Byzantine East, Latin West: Art-historical studies in honor of Kurt Weitzmann* (Princeton N.J. 1995) 385–91 and its expanded version in his monograph *The Icons of their Bodies. Saints and their Images in Byzantium* (Princeton N.J. 1996) 146–194. See also H. Maguire, 'The art of comparing in Byzantium', *Art Bulletin* 70 (1988) 88–103.

5 On Weitzmann's role in the study of pictorial narrative, see G. Horváth, *From Sequence to Scenario. The Historiography and Theory of Visual Narration* (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of East Anglia, 2010) 51–4.

6 The most typical example is the pictorial cycle of the Life of the Virgin, which is attributed to a, now lost, illustrated copy of the Protevangelium of James, see J. Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Iconographie de l'enfance de la Vierge dans l'empire byzantin et en Occident*, I (Bruxelles 1964) 190–1, 196ff. On the supposed dependency of monumental painting on illustrated manuscripts, E. Kitzinger, 'The role of miniature painting in mural decoration', in K. Weitzmann (ed.), *The Place of Book Illumination in Byzantine Art* (Princeton N.J. 1975) 99–142.

episodes in a continuous space. Focusing mostly on illustrated manuscripts Weitzmann defined the different types of narrative images and saw a progression moving from a *monoscenic* to a *polyscenic* narration mode, which he thought was artistically superior.⁷

Widespread endorsement of this concept and of the classical system of monumental iconographic programmes laid down by Otto Demus in his seminal book on Byzantine mosaic decoration resulted in a corresponding evolutionary model becoming tacitly accepted in the study of visual narrative in monumental painting.⁸ This model was based on the premise that there was a transition from the 'laconic' and dogmatic iconographic programmes of the period after Iconoclasm to the garrulous story-telling of Palaiologan monumental art with a continual accretion of narrative scenes.⁹ In this scheme the beginnings of the narrative turn is often traced to the Comnenian period, when increasing interest in the individual and her/his emotions led to a 'humanisation' of religious art and traditional iconographic programmes being extended by the addition of highly charged emotional scenes of the Passion and painted Lives of saints.¹⁰

It must also be acknowledged that the taxonomies have such deep roots in the study of Byzantine monumental art that even in recent studies they have impeded a historical understanding of visual narrative. For example, although recently Nektarios Zarras and Ivana Jevtić have correctly noted and commented on the innovations in narrative

7 G. Horváth, 'A passion for order: classifications for narrative imagery in art history and beyond', in *Visuelle Narrative – Kulturelle Identitäten / Visual Narratives – Cultural Identities*. Special Issue of *Visual Past*, A Journal for the Study of Past Visual Cultures, 3.1 (2016). <http://www.visualpast.de/archive/content.html>) 254–5.

8 The basic thesis of O. Demus, *Byzantine Mosaic Decoration* (London 1947 [1948]), was that the interior space of a Byzantine church reflected the hierarchy of the heavenly kingdom and the relationship between humanity and divinity with images of saints on the lower part of the church walls leading upwards to the narrative of Christ's life and finally to representations of the *Pantokrator* in the dome. These principles have remained paradigmatic in the study of Byzantine monumental painting, see E. Kitzinger, 'Reflections on the Feast Cycle in Byzantine Art', *Cahiers Archéologiques* XXXVI (1988) 51–73; H. Maguire, 'The cycle of images in the church', in L. Safran (ed.), *Heaven on Earth. Art and the Church in Byzantium* (Philadelphia 1998) 121–51. On the importance of this study, Brubaker, 'Critical approaches', 60. On the persistence of Demus' scheme in the interpretation of the Byzantine church interior decoration, S. Ćurčić, 'The church as a symbol of the cosmos in Byzantine architecture and art', in A. Drandaki, D. Papanikola-Bakirtzi, A. Tourta, (eds.) *Heaven & Earth. Art of Byzantium from Greek Collections* (Athens 2013) 105–6.

9 S. Dufrenne, 'L'enrichissement du programme iconographique dans les églises byzantines du XIII^e siècle' and T. Velmans, 'Les valeurs affectives dans la peinture murale byzantine au XIII^e siècle et la manière de les représenter', in *L'art byzantin du XIII^e siècle. Symposium de Sopoćani 1965* (Belgrade 1967) 35–46 and 47–57; J. Lafontaine-Dosogne, 'L'évolution du programme décoratif des églises de 1071–1261', in *Actes du XVe Congrès International d'Études Byzantines, Rapports et co-rapports*, III (Athens 1976) 131–56; T. Velmans, *La peinture murale byzantine à la fin du Moyen Age* (Paris 1977) 102–13; A. J. Wharton, 'Church programs of decoration', in Alexander P. Kazhdan, et al. (eds.), *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (Oxford 1991) I, 459.

10 L. Hadermann-Misguich, 'La peinture monumentale tardo-commène et ses prolongements au XIII^e siècles', in *Actes XVe C.I.É.B.*, 99–127.

tropes appearing in Palaiologan art – such as a) the development of smaller sub-cycles of scenes within the Passion cycle, b) the lengthy inscriptions annotating the scenes and c) the continuous narrative developing like a frieze with the figure of the protagonist repeated in order to convey physical movement and time sequences – they nevertheless attribute the models that inspired these developments to painted manuscripts or trace their roots back to Early Christian art.¹¹ Similarly, they ultimately interpret the narrativity of these Palaiologan cycles as reflecting the influence of the liturgy or the spirit of the age, without posing what – to my mind – is the central question: i.e. why these things should appear at this time and in this way.¹²

In order to tackle this question, I would suggest that we first look for research tools in literary criticism and more especially in narratology, i.e. the study of the narrative structure of oral and written texts.¹³ In this approach narrative is defined as a representation of an event or series of events and it comprises two distinct elements: the *story* and its telling, i.e. the so called *narrative discourse*, by a *narrator*, who is not necessarily the author of the narrative or even identified and present in it.¹⁴ In addition to these three aspects, story, narration and narrator, what is crucial to a theoretical understanding of narrative in the visual arts is its *recipient*, i.e. each and every viewer, who will annotate the images with text and dialogue, arrange the plot and finally craft the story.¹⁵

Starting from these premises, we might first of all agree that, in the Middle Ages, both in Byzantium and in the West, the *story* behind any visual narrative in monumental art was that of the divine dispensation for the salvation of mankind. Starting from the Creation, it focused on the eventful life of its hero, Jesus Christ, culminating in the

11 N. Zarras, 'The Passion cycle in Staro Nagoričino', *JÖB* 60 (2010) 181–213, esp. 202–5; I. Jevtić, 'Narrative mode in late Byzantine painting: questions it raises about sacred images', in *Actual Problems of Theory and History of Art. Papers from the Third Annual International Symposium in Art History and Theory of Art* (St Petersburg 2013) 195–200.

12 Zarras developed his theory in more detail in a later article, in which he once again interprets the visual narrative in theological terms and attributes the narrativity of the late Byzantine period to developments in liturgical ritual, N. Zarras, 'Narrating the sacred story: New Testament cycles in middle and late Byzantine church decoration', in D. Krueger, R. S. Nelson (eds.), *The New Testament in Byzantium* (Washington, D.C. 2016) 239–75.

13 The scholarship on literary narrative theory is immense. Rooted in structural linguistics and semiology, narratology has nowadays expanded beyond the study of texts and is regarded as an autonomous field dedicated to research into the logic, principles, and practices of narrative representation across various media; see D. Herman, 'Introduction', in D. Herman (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Narrative* (Cambridge 2007) 3–21; J.C. Meister, 'Narratology', in P. Hühn et al. (eds.), *The Living Handbook of Narratology* (<http://www.lhn.uni-hamburg.de/article/narratology> [view date: 3 Sep 2018]).

14 H. Porter Abbott, *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative* (Cambridge 2002); H. Porter Abbott, 'Story, plot, and narration,' in *Cambridge Companion to Narrative*, 39–51.

15 Abbott, *Narrative*, 6–9. The viewer acquires an important place in decoding a visual narrative in the work of Ernst Gombrich, see Horváth, *From Sequence to Scenario*, 64–5. On the role of the viewer in pictorial narrative, see W. Kemp, 'Narrative', in R. C. Nelson, R. Shiff (eds.), *Critical Terms for Art History* (Chicago 1996) 67–9.

drama of the Passion, with an auspicious ending for the faithful in the Last Judgement.¹⁶ Thus the *story* also extended into the future, including the lives of a medieval society, a public familiar with the basic points of its plot. Therefore the story of divine Providence constituted both the framing device and the *master narrative* that contained and delineated all the individual narratives that have come down to us in images from monumental painting/mosaic.¹⁷

Despite the fact that the nucleus of this story remained the same throughout the Byzantine period, its narration in art varied not just from one period to the next but also from one monument to another in the same period. If, for example, the same viewer attempted to retell the story of the life of the Theotokos through the iconographic cycles of Daphni Monastery near Athens, the Chora Monastery in Constantinople and the Perivleptos in Mistra, s/he would create a very different narration in each case. This discrepancy is not only due to the differences in medium, date or style that separate these programmes, but also to the narrative strategies adopted in each of them.

More specifically, in the monastery church at Daphni, located ten kilometres outside Athens and dated to the third quarter of the eleventh century, one of the earliest middle Byzantine pictorial biographies of the Virgin is preserved.¹⁸ The six scenes from Mary's Life, shared between the naos and the narthex, are presented out of chronological order and each confined to their architectural framework (fig. 1).¹⁹ Thus, they are stages in the visual discourse with conceptual and narrative independence. A minimum of action is discernible, since the unusually naturalistic figures are depicted motionless against a gold ground. The viewer's only direct eye contact with the scene is through the gaze of some secondary figure, while all the *dramatis personae* often seem to have become

16 S. Lewis, 'Narrative', in C. Rudolph (ed.), *A Companion to Medieval Art: Romanesque and Gothic in Northern Europe* (Oxford 2006) 86–105. The same is true of the literary forms of narrative in the Byzantine world, E. C. Bourbouhakis and I. Nilsson, 'Byzantine narrative: the form of story-telling in Byzantium', in L. James (ed.), *A Companion to Byzantium* (Oxford 2010) 264.

17 For a definition of framing narrative, Abbott, *Narrative*, 25–26; J. Pier, 'Narrative Levels', in *The Living Handbook of Narratology*, <http://www.lhn.uni-hamburg.de/article/narrative-levels-revised-version-uploaded-23-april-2014> [view date: 7 Sep 2018]. In narrative theory, *master narrative* or *master plot* defines the archetypal stories, the narrative schemes that order and explain knowledge and experience of the world in a given historical and social context, see Abbott, *Narrative*, 42–3. D. Herman, M. Jahn, M. L. Ryan (eds.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory* (London and New York 2005) s.v. 'master narrative'.

18 On the monastery dating to the last quarter of the 11th c.: Ch. Bouras 'The Daphni monastic complex reconsidered', in I. Ševčenko, I. Hutter (eds.), *AETOS. Studies in honour of Cyril Mango* (Stuttgart and Leipzig 1998) 1–14, with the earlier bibliography on the architecture and history of the monument. On its mosaic decoration: L. James, *Mosaics in the Medieval World: from Late Antiquity to the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge 2017) 339–344. James dates the mosaics to the mid-11th c., but a dating to the end of the century seems more convincing, see D. Mouriki, 'Stylistic trends in monumental painting of Greece during the eleventh and twelfth centuries' *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 34/35 (1980/1981) 77–124.

19 On the church's iconographic programme, see Maguire, 'The cycle of images in the church', 137–50. On the life cycle of the Virgin at Daphni: Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Iconographie de l'enfance de la Vierge*, passim.



Fig. 1. Attica, Daphni, Monastery church. View of the interior, late eleventh century. Photo: Ktiv [CC BY-SA 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0>)], from Wikimedia Commons

frozen in time. The Nativity of the Virgin is a typical example (fig. 2): the figures appear closed in on themselves and absorbed in their own thoughts, their gazes do not meet, and only one of the servant girls standing behind the reclining Anne looks out of the composition in the direction of the viewer. If we were to put a text to these scenes it would not be dialogues or monologues spoken by the characters involved, but the words of an external narrator coming from the apocryphal text of the Protevangelium or a Gospel account. Moreover, as the scenes are interwoven spatially and typologically with scenes from the Life and Passion of Christ, this cycle is ultimately open to multiple readings by the viewer.²⁰

In the Chora Monastery in Constantinople (1315–1320/1) on the other hand the narrative time of the story of the Virgin has been greatly extended, as it contains 22 scenes that unfold in circular fashion on the walls of the inner narthex (fig. 3).²¹ The narrative faithfully follows the Protevangelium and continues in the exonarthex in the

20 On the typological relationship between the scenes from the Life of the Virgin and those in the Christological cycle at Daphni: Maguire, *The Icons of their Bodies*, 150–69.

21 P.A. Underwood, *The Kariye Djami* (New York 1966) I, 29, 60–99; II, pl. 14–15, 83–99; J. Lafontaine-Dosogne, ‘The cycle of the life of the Virgin’, in P.A. Underwood (ed.), *The Kariye Djami*, IV: *Studies in the Art of Kariye Djami and its Intellectual Background* (Princeton and London 1975) 163–94.



Fig. 2. Attica, Daphni, Monastery church. The Nativity of the Virgin, late eleventh century. Photo: Municipality of Haidari [CC BY-SA 3.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>)], from <http://haidari.culhub.gr/>

same circular fashion with the story of Christ's childhood, in which Mary once again plays a leading role.²² The narration is tightly knit, as the events succeed one another in chronological order, both by virtue of their position in the architectural framework and also thanks to the movements and gestures of the protagonists, which lead the viewer from one episode to the next. The postures of the three figures in the scene of Joseph taking the Virgin away from the Temple are typical (fig. 4): the elderly widower and his young son are represented moving to the right towards the next scenes, which take place in their house, while turning back to look in the direction of

22 J. Lafontaine-Dosogne, 'The cycle of the infancy of Christ', *op. cit.*, IV, 197–241.

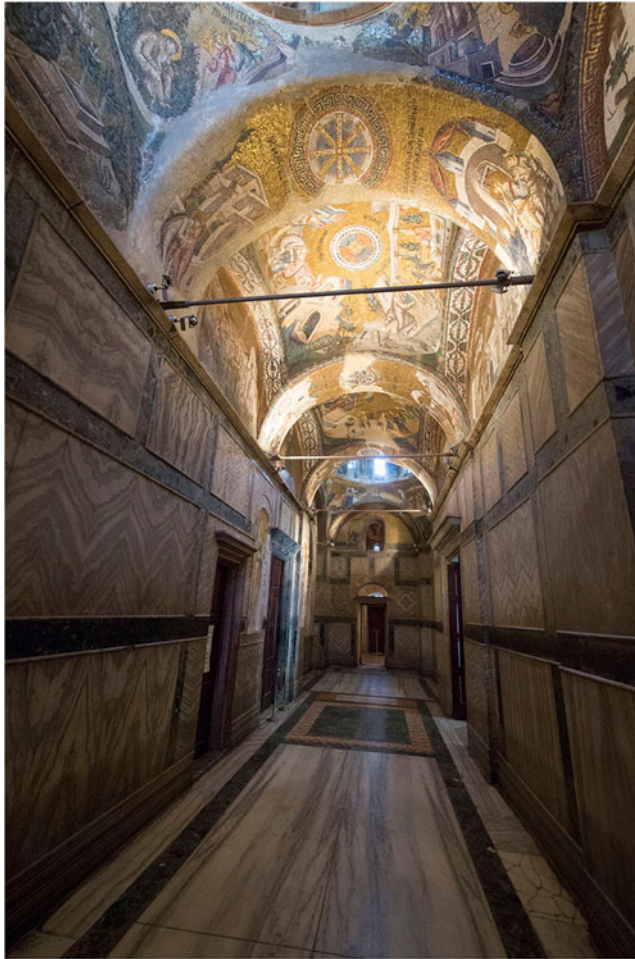


Fig. 3. Constantinople, Chora Monastery (Kariye Djami), 1315–20. View of the inner narthex. The cycle of the Life of the Virgin. Photo: Dick Osseman

the young girl, Mary, who is following them.²³ In this way, the scenes/episodes follow one another in a continuous fashion and the pictorial discourse acquires a rhythmical, uninterrupted flow. However, not all the episodes are allotted the same narrative time. Some can be brief, such as those depicted on the small surfaces of the arches that support the vaults; for example, the emotionally charged scene of the infant Mary taking her first steps (fig. 5).²⁴ Others are greatly extended and occupy a whole dome, allowing room to create secondary narratives within each event, such as the young Jewish girls in the procession talking animatedly to one another in the scene of the

23 Underwood, *Kariye Djami*, I, 81; II, pl. 143–5.

24 *Op. cit.*, I, 68–9; II, pl. 104–7.



Fig. 4. Constantinople, Chora Monastery (Kariye Djami), 1315–20. Joseph taking Mary home. Photo: Dick Osseman

Presentation in the Temple (fig. 6).²⁵ These supplementary events are sometimes turned into embedded narratives.²⁶ The episode of the lament of the mothers over their dead children in Herod’s Massacre of the Innocents, unique for the size and detail of the representation, is one such ‘story within a story’ of Mary and her new-born son.²⁷

25 *Op. cit.*, I, 72–3; II, pl. 119, 121, 123, 124.

26 ‘Supplementary events are events that do not drive the story forward and without which the story would still remain intact’: Abbott, *Narrative*, 20–2. Embedding narrative on the other hand involves: ‘a “story within a story”, the structure by which a character in a narrative text becomes the narrator of a second narrative text framed by the first one’, *Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory*, s.v. ‘embedding’.

27 The elaborate treatment of the lament over the dead children in the Chora monastery is noteworthy. It is represented in a separate scene occupying a very large surface of the outer narthex, whereas in the typical Byzantine scene of the Massacre of the Innocents usually only one mother is depicted as a secondary motif



Fig. 5. Constantinople, Chora Monastery (Kariye Djami), 1315–20. Virgin Mary taking her first steps. Photo: Dick Osseman

Thus, the narrative in the Chora monastery combines multiple narrative times and narratorial voices. The narrators can take part in the events mainly as secondary characters in the plot, who turn their gaze on the beholder, or watch the action with her/him, as for example the young woman, Anne's maidservant, who peers over a low wall at the embrace between Mary's parents on Joachim's return from the

expressing her grief, Underwood, *Kariye Djami*, I, 102–3; II, pl. 194–6; Lafontaine-Dosogne, 'The cycle of the infancy of Christ', 229–34 (esp. 233–4). For the textual sources of the subject: Maguire, *Art and Eloquence*, 31–3. For an appealing interpretation of the treatment of the theme in the Chora, based on the historical background of the period and the biography of the patron, Theodoros Metochites, R. S. Nelson, 'Taxation with representation. Visual narrative and the political field of the Kariye Camii', *Art History* 22 (1999) 56–82.



Fig. 6. Constantinople, Chora Monastery (Kariye Djami), 1315–20. The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple. Photo: Dick Osseman

wilderness.²⁸ However, the chief narratorial voice comes from an external narrator, to whom we should attribute the long passages from the Gospel inscribed in some instances in the background to the scenes.²⁹ One more detail that distinguishes the narration in the Chora Monastery is that it does not restrict itself to rendering the action, but includes some painted descriptions of the surroundings that are important in the development of the story. The verdant gardens in the scenes of the Annunciation to Anna, the Virgin Caressed by her Parents and the Entry into the Temple, with their many flowers and magnificent birdlife, including peacocks, pheasants and partridges, are painted references to the literary images of nature with which the Virgin is compared in Byzantine theological texts.³⁰ Thus they correspond with the horizon of expectations of the medieval viewer, who was familiar with these literary metaphors, and similarly they multiply the narrative levels in the story.

By contrast, in the Perivleptos in Mistra, painted some years later (ca 1360–80), despite the increased number of scenes, the narrative discourse is simpler.³¹ The story

28 Underwood, *Kariye Djami* I, 65–6; II, pl. 96–7.

29 The lengthy passages, quoted directly from the Gospels, narrate the story in the third person and sometimes address the viewer, e.g. the inscription on the scene of Joseph's dream: 'Behold the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying...' (Matt. 1:20), Underwood, *Kariye Djami*, I, 86, 152.

30 H. Maguire, 'Rhetoric and reality in the art of the Kariye Camii', in H. A. Klein, R. G. Ousterhout and B. Pitarakis (eds.), *The Kariye Camii Reconsidered* (Istanbul 2011) 57–69.

31 For a recent presentation of the painted programme in the Perivleptos with earlier bibliography, M. Emmanuel, 'Το εικονογραφικό πρόγραμμα του καθολικού της μονής Περιβλεπτού στον Μυστρά και το



Fig.7. Mistra, Perivleptos church (c. 1380). View of the interior, the cycle of the Life of the Virgin. Photo: Sharon Gerstel

unfolds in linear fashion, with independent episodes placed in chronological order in the upper register of the walls of the church (fig. 7).³² The scenes, divided from one another by frames, are all of the same size. Moreover, they are related to the text of the Protevangelium by the large extracts inscribed on the backdrop to almost all the scenes, like the continuous voice of a narrator in the background.³³ Ultimately, despite the fact that the visual narrative in the Perivleptos renders almost every phrase of the text, it does not have the sophisticated character and the complexity seen in the Chora Monastery.

The question that arises from the above is whether the different methods of narration and the degree of narrativity can reveal anything about the function of the work, its creators, its audience and finally its date. In other words, could this kind of narratological analysis also be a tool for understanding the work of art in social and historical terms, and not simply another method of classification?

I propose that we approach this question in two ways: 1. by examining whether similar narrative structures are found in contemporary literature. 2. by looking for information about how contemporary viewers read the story in monumental narrative

ζήτημα του κτήτορα', in V. Katsaros and A. Tourta (eds.), *Αφιέρωμα στον Ακαδημαϊκό Παναγιώτη Α. Βοκοτόπουλο* (Athens 2015) 407–16. See also Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Iconographie de l'enfance de la Vierge*, passim.

32 S. Dufrenne, *Les programmes iconographiques des églises byzantines de Mistra* (Paris 1970) 14–16.

33 For the lengthy inscriptions with direct quotations from the Protoevangelium see also D. Mouriki, 'Τέσσαρες μη μελετηθείσαι σκηναί του βίου της Παναγίας εις την Περιβλεπτον του Μυστρά', *Αρχαιολογική Εφημερίς* 1968 (Chronika) 1–6.

paintings. Though, unfortunately, Byzantine literature has little in the way of these sorts of written testimonies, any evidence of the Byzantine viewer's response to narrative works could make a decisive contribution to the decoding of visual narrative in Byzantium.³⁴

I will start with the first question. It is true that the twelfth century was a period that saw revolutionary changes in the field of literature, changes that were already in the making by the end of the eleventh century. The quality, quantity and indeed the originality of narrative genres of this period were so important that Margaret Mullet called it the age of 'novelisation' of Byzantine literature.³⁵ In addition to the emergence of the romantic novel and narrative poetry, such as the Epic of Digenis Akritis, new, elaborated and sustained narrative features emerge in other genres, for example in historiography and hagiography.³⁶ The emergence of the new narrative genres is due both to contact with the corresponding texts of ancient literature³⁷ and the rediscovery of tragedy as an instrument for rhetorical display of pathos and lament.³⁸ Thus, as Panagiotis Agapitos has observed, the romances of the twelfth century: '...do not represent stories as narrative fiction. They constitute plots in "poetically constructed language"... built out of a series of *tableaux vivants* in which various *πάθη* and *ῥήθη* were acted out in strict observation of rhetorical rules'.³⁹ The dependence of twelfth-century novels on the Byzantine interpretation of tragedy as rhetorical drama also influenced their narrative structure. That is to say, they are arranged in books, each of which is organised in a defined spatial sequence and a clear arc of time, usually over a single day, and includes episodes, similarly fully chronologically

34 For a similar approach, H. Maguire, *Image and Imagination: The Byzantine Epigram as Evidence for Viewer Response* (Toronto 1996).

35 M. Mullett, 'Novelisation in Byzantium: narrative after the revival of fiction', in J. Burke (ed.), *Byzantine Narrative* (Melbourne 2006) 1–28.

36 Bourbouhakis and Nilsson, 'Byzantine narrative', 268, 271–273 ; I. Nilsson, *Raconter Byzance : la littérature au XIIe siècle* (Paris 2014), esp. ch. III. For a recent survey of 12th-c. novels with updated bibliographies: I. Nilsson, 'Romantic love in rhetorical guise: the Byzantine revival of the twelfth century', in C. Cupane and B. Krönung (eds.), *Fictional Storytelling in the Medieval Eastern Mediterranean and Beyond* (Leiden and Boston 2016) 39–66.

37 P. A. Agapitos, 'In Rhomaian, Frankish and Persian lands: fiction and fictionality in Byzantium and beyond', in P. A. Agapitos and L. B. Mortensen (eds.), *Medieval Narratives between History and Fiction: From the Centre to the Periphery of Europe, c. 1100–1400* (Copenhagen 2012) 249–54; I. Nilsson, N. Zagklas, "Hurry up, reap every flower of the *logoï*!" The use of Greek novels in Byzantium', *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 57 (2017) 1120–48. On the 12th-c. authors' lively dialogue with ancient literature: P. A. Agapitos, 'Ancient models and novel mixtures: the concept of genre in Byzantine funerary literature from Photios to Eustathios of Thessalonike', in G. Nagy, and A. Stavrakopoulou (eds.), *Modern Greek Literature. Critical Essays* (New York and London 2003) 12–15. For a more holistic interpretation of the phenomenon as the expression of a new identity adopted by Byzantine scholars, R. Macrides and P. Magdalino, 'The fourth kingdom and the rhetoric of Hellenism', in P. Magdalino (ed.), *The Perception of the Past in Twelfth-Century Europe* (London and Rio Grande, Ohio 1992) 139–56.

38 P. A. Agapitos, 'Narrative, rhetoric and "drama" rediscovered: scholars and poets in Byzantium interpret Heliodorus', in R. Hunter (ed.), *Studies in Heliodorus* (Cambridge 1998) 125–56.

39 Agapitos, 'Narrative, rhetoric and "drama"', 156.

defined, filled with monologues, dialogues, laments and songs, connected one to another with a minimum of action.⁴⁰ The self-contained, episodic arrangement, the rhetorical dramatization of monologues and the use of a narrator to describe the action in these texts are also accounted for by the fact that they were intended to be read out loud in the literary salons of the Comnenian aristocracy, the so-called *theatra*.⁴¹ In addition to influencing the dramatized form of the novels, knowledge of the tragic form affected other texts of the period and little plays emerged complete with protagonist and chorus, all texts intended for reading aloud or for some sort of performance in the literary get-togethers of Constantinople.⁴²

In my opinion, the way in which the stories of the love-struck couples in twelfth-century novels are told corresponds exactly to the way in which the narrative cycles are organised in the art of the period. Arranged in independent episodes with a well-defined narrative time-frame and unified space, dramatized speeches and minimal action, like a series of *tableaux vivants*, just as Agapitos has described them, the narration of the Comnenian novels could well be compared to the pictorial biography of the Virgin at Daphni, discussed above, and would be even closer to the narration of the Passion in the Church of St. Panteleimon in Nerezi (1164).⁴³ Commissioned by a member of the Comnenian imperial family, Alexios Angelos Komnenos, the painted programme of Nerezi emphasizes the human sacrifice of Christ by means of its prominent position and the size of the scenes of the Passion, which are embedded in a cycle of the Great Feasts and arranged in chronological order (fig. 8).⁴⁴ Each scene forms a conceptual and narrative entity, in which the figures, with their dramatic expressions and their restrained movements, give the impression of having been

40 P. A. Agapitos, 'Genre, structure and poetics in the Byzantine vernacular romances of love', *Symbolae Osloenses* 79 (2004) 34–5.

41 On the narrative structure of Comnenian novels as an indication of oral recitation, P. A. Agapitos, 'Writing, reading and reciting (in) Byzantine erotic fiction', in B. Mondrain (ed.), *Lire et écrire à Byzance* (Paris 2006) 135–152; Nilsson, 'Romantic love in rhetorical guise', 52–3.

42 M. Alexiou, 'Ploys of performance: games and play in the Ptochoprodromic poems', *Dumbarton Oaks papers* 53 (1999) 91–109; M. Mullet, 'No drama, no poetry, no fiction, no readership, no literature', in *Companion to Byzantium*, 227–9. On 12th-c. *theatra*: M. Mullet, 'Aristocracy and patronage in the literary circles of Comnenian Constantinople', in M. Angold (ed.), *The Byzantine Aristocracy IX to XIII Centuries* (Oxford 1984) 73–197; P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos 1143–1180* (Cambridge 1993) 352–6; S. MacAlister, *Dreams and Suicides: The Greek Novel from Antiquity to the Byzantine Empire* (London and New York 1996) 155–6; P. Marciniak, 'Byzantine Theatron – a place of performance?', in M. Grünbart (ed.), *Theatron. Rhetorische Kultur in Spätantike und Mittelalter* (Berlin and New York 2007) 277–85.

43 On the church in Nerezi and its wall-paintings, I. Sinkević, *The Church of St. Panteleimon at Nerezi. Architecture, Programme, Patronage* (Wiesbaden 2000).

44 The emphasis on the themes of the Passion and intercession at Nerezi, along with the presence of a tomb in the north-west chapel, suggest that the patron, Alexios Komnenos, may have intended the church for his own burial place, Sinkević, op. cit. 48–58.



Fig. 8. Nerezi, church of St. Panteleimon (1164). The scenes of the Passion: Deposition from the Cross and Lamentation (detail). Photo: Sharon Gerstel

stopped in their tracks, having just delivered a dramatic monologue.⁴⁵ Thus storytelling and painted cycles share the same rhetorical mode of narration and it is not accidental that both were intended for and connected through patronage relationships with the upper echelons of society in the twelfth-century capital.⁴⁶

We might also find correspondences between the narrative structure of the same type of text, i.e. the vernacular romances of the late Byzantine period, and the strategies deployed in the visual narratives of that period. In Palaiologan romances the plot is developed in linear mode, the narrative units are not divided into dramatic episodes and storytelling flows continuously.⁴⁷ For the most part it is the same narrative

45 It is interesting to note that Agapitos mentions the common narrative aesthetic that connects the fiction and the monumental painting of the period: ‘Genre, structure and poetics’, 49–50.

46 On the patrons and the intended audience of the Comnenian novels, P. A. Agapitos, ‘Η θέση της αισθητικής αποτίμησης σε μια «νέα» ιστορία της βυζαντινής λογοτεχνίας’, in P. Odorico, P. A. Agapitos (eds.), *Pour une ‘Nouvelle’ Histoire de la Littérature byzantine. Actes du Colloque international philologique* (Paris 2002) 202–7; Agapitos, ‘Writing, reading and reciting’; P. Roilos, ‘“I grasp, oh artist, your enigma, I grasp your drama”: reconstructing the implied audience of the twelfth-century Byzantine novel’, in Cupane and Krönung (eds.), *Fictional Storytelling*, 463–78.

47 P. A. Agapitos, *Narrative Structure in the Byzantine Vernacular Romances. A Textual and Literary Study of Kallimachos, Belthandros and Libistros* (Munich 1991); idem, ‘Η θέση της αισθητικής αποτίμησης’; idem, ‘Genre, structure and poetics’. For a recent survey of the Palaiologan romances with updated

structure that is applied to the painted cycles of the Palaiologan period, in which a *continuous narrative* very often prevails, i.e. the episodes in the story are depicted without dividing lines against a shared backdrop, in which the figure of the main character is repeated to indicate successive events.⁴⁸ The most highly elaborated examples are the late thirteenth/early fourteenth-century cycles of the Life and Passion of Christ in monuments on Mount Athos, in Thessaloniki and Serbia, the majority of which are connected with the workshop of Michael Astrapas and Eutychios (fig. 9).⁴⁹ Furthermore, in the romances of the late Byzantine period, more refined narrative structures also emerge, reminiscent of the arrangement of episodes in the mosaics of the Chora Monastery in Constantinople, i.e. with embedded narratives and alternating narrators that ‘constantly reshape the audience’s experience of the story through shifts in dramatic immediacy’.⁵⁰

The dense dialogues and the role of space in the development of the narration is another common element between narrative texts and visual storytelling in the Palaiologan period. As in the texts, the story in the visual narrative unfolds through lively dialogues, implied by movements and gestures or by lengthy inscriptions that annotate the scenes.⁵¹ On the one hand these inscriptions transmit the text of the

bibliographies, C. Cupane, ‘In the realm of Eros: the late Byzantine vernacular romances – original texts’, in Cupane and Krönung (eds.), *Fictional Storytelling*, 95–126.

48 Franz Wickhoff was the first to recognize the *continuous* narration as a distinct type of narrative imagery in his seminal book, *Die Wiener Genesis* (Vienna 1895). This mode, renamed cyclic or polyscenic method of narration, was further studied by K. Weitzmann, mainly in his *Illustrations in Roll and Codex* (Princeton 1947, repr. 1970), see Lewis, ‘Narrative’, 88–9; Horváth, *From Sequence to Scenario*, 41–4; eadem, ‘A passion for order’, 252–4.

49 For example in the Perivleptos at Ochrid (1295), in the Katholikon of the Protaton (ca 1310) and Vatopedi (1312) monasteries on Mount Athos, in St Nikolaos Orphanos in Thessaloniki (ca 1310–20), in St. George at Staro Nagoričino (1317/18), in St. Niketa at Čučer (ca 1321): see M. Marković, ‘Iconographic program of the oldest wall paintings in the church of the Virgin Peribleptos at Ohrid: a list of frescoes and notes on certain program particularities’, *Zograf* 35 (2011) 119–43; A. Nastou, ‘To εικονογραφικό πρόγραμμα του Πρωτάτου’, in I. Kanonidis (ed.), *Πρωτάτο II. Η συντήρηση των τοιχογραφιών*, vol. 2 (Polygyros 2015) 15–16, 142–51; E. Tsigaridas, ‘Τα ψηφιδωτά και οι βυζαντινές τοιχογραφίες’, in *Ιερά Μεγίστη Μονή Βατοπαδίου. Παράδοση-Ιστορία-Τέχνη* (Mount Athos 1996), 259–79, figs 218, 224; A. Tsitouridou, *Ο ζωγραφικός διάκοσμος του Αγίου Νικολάου Ορφανού στη Θεσσαλονίκη* (Thessaloniki 1986), 109–27; Zarras, ‘Staro Nagoričino’; M. Marković, *Saint Niketas near Skopje. A foundation of King Milutin* (Belgrade 2015) (in Serbian with an English summary) 339–40, fig. 8-9.

50 Bourboulakis, Nilsson, ‘Byzantine narrative’, 273. This comment refers specifically to the work *Libistros and Rhodamne*, which is the most interesting example of a complex narrative structure in the group of late Byzantine romances, P. A. Agapitos, *Αφήγησις Αιβίστρου και Ροδάμνης. Κριτική έκδοση της διασκευής «Άλφα»* (Athens 2006) 58–60; idem, ‘Genre, structure and poetics’, 31–36; Cupane, ‘In the realm of Eros’, 101–110.

51 On the role of the *discursive* mode, and especially of dialogues, in the narrative strategies of the late Byzantine romances: Agapitos, *Narrative structure*, 159–176. On the inscriptions that accompany the Christological scenes in Palaiologan painted cycles, Zarras, ‘Staro Nagoričino’, 204; Jevtić, ‘Narrative mode’, 197–8, Zarras, ‘Narrating the Sacred Story’, 264–5.

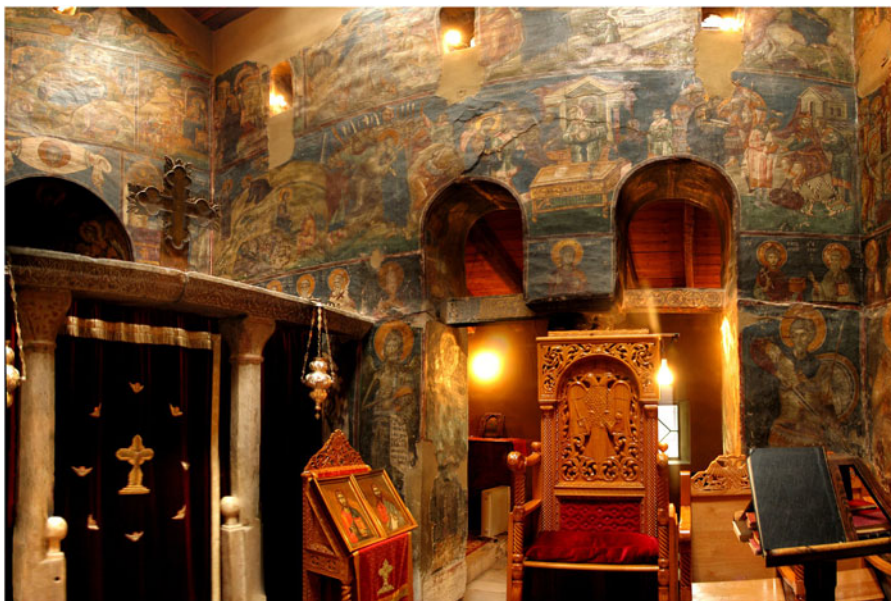


Fig. 9. Thessaloniki, church of St. Nikolaos Orphanos (c. 1310–20). View of the interior, the cycle of the Passion (*continuous narrative*). Photo: Anna Schön [CC BY-SA 3.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>)], from Wikimedia Commons.

gospel, representing the voice of the external narrator, while on the other, in some instances, they also suggest a dialogue between the figures depicted.⁵² The important role played by dialogue as a vehicle for the narration in visual storytelling is also reflected in the integration of scenes in which the only action represented is a

52 See, for example, the scene with the conversation between Joseph and Mary after the Annunciation in the Chora Monastery, where the inscription records Joseph's words: 'Mary, what is this deed?', Underwood, *Kariye Djami*, I, 83; II, pl. 148–50. Another typical example is the episode of the Prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane in paintings from the workshop of Michael Astrapas and Eutychios in the monuments mentioned above. The gestures and the poses of the main characters hint at the dialogue going on between them (see Nastou, 'Το εικονογραφικό πρόγραμμα του Προτάτου', 16, fig. 2), and above all in the scene in the Perivleptos in Ohrid (1295) and St Nikolaos Orphanos (1310–20) which preserve the inscriptions with the relevant passages from the gospel transmitting Christ's words, see M. Acheimastou-Potamianou, *Βυζαντινές τοιχογραφίες* (Athens 1985) 238, fig. 110 and Tsitouridou, *Ο ζωγραφικός διάκοσμος*, 112–13, pl. 34. The cycle of Christ's infancy from the Hodegetria Church in Mistra is an extraordinary case: the lengthy inscriptions from the Protevangelium of James representing the dialogues between the dramatis personae of the visual narrative create, according to Titos Papamastorakis: 'a kind of cinematic art of speaking pictures', see 'Reflections of Constantinople: the iconographic program of the south portico of the Hodegetria church, Mystras', in S. E. J. Gerstel (ed.), *Viewing the Morea: Land and People in the Late Medieval Peloponnese* (Washington, DC 2013) 371–95.



Fig. 10. Staro Nagoričino, church of St. George (1317/18). The Washing of the Feet. Photo: Georgi Serdarov [CC BY-SA 3.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0>)], via Wikimedia Commons.

conversation, such as the scene that illustrates Christ teaching his disciples after the Washing of the Feet (fig. 10).⁵³

Similarly, the colourful descriptions of space in the late Byzantine romances were not only a device for the creation of a theatrical stage for the action but played a crucial role in the development of the narration.⁵⁴ From the point of view of structure these descriptions

53 The scene appears for the first time in monumental painting in the abovementioned programmes connected with Thessaloniki, and in some cases indeed, such as at Staro Nagoričino, it is accompanied once again by a lengthy inscription transmitting the words of the episode's protagonist, Zarras, 'Staro Nagoričino', 184–5. Traces of a similarly lengthy inscription can be seen in the corresponding scene in the Protaton, I. Kanonides, 'Ο τοιχογραφικός διάκοσμος του ναού του Πρωτάτου, κορυφαία καλλιτεχνική έκφραση της εποχής των Παλαιολόγων', in *Πρωτάτο* II, 1: 286–7 no. 233. See also the interesting analysis of this scene - and of the Passion Cycle in general - in the above mentioned monuments taken by Judith Soria, according to whom the fact that the disciples are simultaneously ignorant of and being initiated into the significance of the event they had witnessed adds tension to the narrative, J. Soria, 'Structure et tension narrative dans les cycles pariétaux de la Passion du Christ à l'époque tardobyzantine: le rôle des apôtres', in Ch. Messis, M. Mullet and I. Nilsson (eds.), *Storytelling in Byzantium. Narratological Approaches to Byzantine Texts and Images* (Uppsala 2018) 177–97.

54 Agapitos, *Narrative Structure*, 177–204, 282–333; idem, 'Dreams and the spatial aesthetics of narrative presentation in *Livistros* and *Rhodamne*', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 53 (1999) 111–47. C. Cupane,

did not sketch out scenery isolated from the narrated acts, but rather followed the movements of the wandering heroes, reflected their emotional state and were often interrupted by internal monologues or dialogues.⁵⁵ In the same way the elaborate architectural frames in the narrative scenes of Palaiologan art are instrumental in the storytelling in the way they highlight the protagonists of the events, emphasise their emotions and join up the action (fig. 10).⁵⁶ Moreover, certain motifs of space in the novels, such as the castle, loaded with allegorical meaning and symbolism, give the narrative depth and require the audience's or reader's cooperation in order to decipher them.⁵⁷ Painted landscapes, such as the garden full of flowers in the scenes of the Life of the Virgin mentioned above, may have the same function, given that they were intended to transmit similar allegorical messages to the medieval viewer.⁵⁸

The complexity of narrative structure in late Byzantine novels is probably due to the new conditions in which these texts were being received, as they appear to have been written for reading in private.⁵⁹ The transition from public performance to silent reading also has parallels with the general feeling created by the painted narrative cycles of each period. Thus, the Palaiologan iconographic programmes, with their complex narrative tropes and the numerous cycles covering the whole surface of the

'Künstliche Paradiese. Ortsbeschreibungen in der vulgärsprachlichen Dichtung des späten Byzanz', in C. Ratkowitsch (ed.), *Die poetische Ekphrasis von Kunstwerken: eine literarische Tradition der Großdichtung in Antike, Mittelalter und frühere Neuzeit* (Vienna 2006) 231–45; Agapitos, *Αφήγησις Αιβίστρον*, 60–3.

55 Agapitos, 'Dreams'; Cupane, 'Künstliche Paradiese', 232.

56 O. Hjort, "Oddities" and "refinements": aspects of architecture, space and narrative in the mosaics of Kariye Camii', in J.O. Rosenqvist (ed.), *Interaction and Isolation in Late Byzantine Culture* (London 2005) 27–43; A. Vasilakeris, 'Theatricality of Byzantine images: some preliminary thoughts', in A. Öztürkmen, E. Birg (eds), *Medieval and Early Modern Performances in the Eastern Mediterranean* (Turnhout 2014) 388–9, who, however, sees the buildings in Palaiologan scenes as a theatrical backdrop, thus limiting their narrative function.

57 On the allegorical significance of spatial motifs, such as the castle in Palaiologan romances, see Cupane, 'In the realm of Eros', 100–1 with earlier bibliography.

58 It should be noted here that architectural settings appear in the background to narrative scenes from as early as the twelfth century and more especially towards the end of that century. These motifs, usually 'small, isolated and flat' according to Tania Velmans, are on the same scale as the figures and are ranged behind them. They do not define a space within which the figures move around, but function as visual conventions depicting an interior or exterior landscape, T. Velmans 'Le rôle du décor architectural et la représentation de l'espace', *Cahiers Archéologiques* 14 (1964) 183–216, esp. 184. Thus, they have a very different and more restricted function compared to the later Palaiologan examples. Moreover, although some examples of architectural backdrops in late Comnenian works of art have prompted allegorical interpretations, they are few and far between and in some cases rather ambiguous, see H. Maguire, *Nectar and Illusion: Nature in Byzantine Art and Literature* (Oxford 2012) 69–70, 135–165.

59 Agapitos, 'Η θέση της αισθητικής αποτίμησης', 216–24; idem, 'Genre, structure and poetics'; idem, 'Writing, reading and reciting'. Carolina Cupane has expressed a somewhat different view, suggesting, based on the romances, that there is no clean break in chronological terms between oral presentation and private reading, C. Cupane, "Let me tell you a wonderful tale": audience and reception of the vernacular romances', in Cupane and Krönung (eds.), *Fictional Storytelling*, 479–94.

walls of the churches, give the impression of having been created to be read and that the viewer, like the reader of a book, can come back to them and re-read them, one by one or in a completely different order.⁶⁰

The audience/readership for the vernacular fiction of the late Byzantine period should first of all be sought in the imperial court circles of Nicaea in the thirteenth century and after that, in the fourteenth century, in the same environment in Constantinople.⁶¹ In these social contexts narrative texts would take on an allegorical interpretation of a Christian nature, which would juxtapose the chequered search for love with man's attempts to get closer to God and gain eternal life.⁶² These allegorical readings, combined with the didactic benefits of the love stories, which the anonymous authors push at every opportunity,⁶³ justify romantic storytelling as a form of literary writing and probably explain the fact that it became the model for narrative works with edifying content: literary texts such as the *Verses On Chastity*, 'a tale of love, yet absolutely chaste', as the author, Theodore Meliteniotes (ca. 1330–1393), a high-ranking official of the Patriarchate in Constantinople, says himself. This poem, which faithfully follows the narrative structure and adopts the motifs of vernacular romances,⁶⁴ suggests that fiction and particularly the romances found a wider reading public than previously imagined, reaching even the innermost circles of the church.⁶⁵

60 Jevtić also notes that the arrangement of the narrative cycles in Palaiologan painted programmes gives the viewer the sense of 'being in a book' ('Narrative mode', 196). However, she does not connect this observation with the changes that occurred in the reception mode of fiction around the same time.

61 P. Agapitos has attributed the creation of *Libistros and Rhodamne* to mid-13th-c. Nicaea. Despite the fact that this attribution has not been endorsed by all scholars (see Cupane, 'In the realm of eros', 101), Agapitos has deployed some very convincing arguments to show that the Laskarid court was the connecting link between Comnenian fiction and the Palaiologan romances, see also 'The "Court of Amorous Dominion" and the "Gate of Love": rituals of empire in a Byzantine romance of the 13th century', in A. Beihammer et al. (eds.), *Royal Ceremonies and Rituals of Power in the Medieval Mediterranean: Comparative Perspectives* (Leiden and Boston 2013) 389–416; P. Agapitos, '"Words filled with tears": amorous discourse as lamentation in the Palaiologan romances', in M. Alexiou and D. Cairns (eds.), *Greek Laughter and Tears: Antiquity and after* (Edinburgh 2017) 371–374. On the readership/audience for late Byzantine romances, see Agapitos, 'Genre, structure and poetics'; idem, 'Writing, reading and reciting'; Cupane, 'Audience and reception'.

62 This interpretation comes from the pen of Manuel Philes and is related to a romance, written by the prince Andronikos Palaiologos, cousin of Emperor Andronikos II (1282–1328), Cupane, 'In the realm of Eros', 95–8 with the relevant bibliography.

63 Agapitos, 'Η θέση της αισθητικής αποτίμησης', 212–214; idem, 'Genre, structure and poetics', 45–50.

64 Agapitos, *Αφήγησις Λιβίστρον*, 171–198; Cupane, 'In the realm of Eros', 118–19.

65 The notion that the romances had a restricted readership because they were incompatible with religious morality was first refuted by H.-G. Beck (see esp. *Byzantinisches Erotikon* (Munich 1986) 160–200). However, the question of how widespread the distribution of such texts or of fiction in general might have been in a religious context cannot be answered until research is carried out into their manuscript tradition, cf. Agapitos, 'Narrative, rhetoric and "drama"', 125–7. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that in the 16th century Orthodox prelates were making collections of manuscripts with this sort of content: Agapitos, 'Writing, reading and reciting', 166, n. 212. Another telling case is that of the expurgated 13th-c.

Despite the fact that these narrative texts were likely to have been widely distributed, there is no doubt that comparing the depiction of Holy Scripture in monumental art with literary genres of an entirely different nature and content may seem somewhat surprising and perhaps even hard to understand.

So it could be interesting to look for parallels between narrative strategies in painting and in texts with religious content. One obstacle standing in the way of this is the fact that narratological analyses have mainly been carried out on secular works of fiction. Even when it comes to saints' lives, the material that lends itself best to such approaches, very few of them have been studied by scholars from this point of view.⁶⁶ On the other hand scholarship has in many instances identified some commonality between hagiographic texts and romantic storytelling.⁶⁷ Despite their profound ideological differences, stylistic and thematic similarities in works from these two categories show that the narrative innovations of any given period were not limited to a single literary genre.⁶⁸ This conclusion, which first of all 'legitimises' comparing narrative literature with religious painting, is confirmed by two texts with religious content, which have narrative strategies in common with the secular texts and works of art of their day.

The first comes from the pen of Theodore Hyrtakenos, a minor intellectual among the Constantinopolitan intelligentsia of the early fourteenth century.⁶⁹ I am referring to the ekphrasis on the garden of St Anne, a text with allusions to visual images and literary *topoi* from contemporary romances. The similarities with the latter are so close that it has been described as a 'mini romance' despite its Christian subject matter.⁷⁰ Anne's garden is described in the same terms as the gardens associated with the heroines of the romances; it acquires the same symbolisms as they do and is compared

manuscript from which folia containing scenes judged obscene have been removed and which was perhaps intended for use in a clerical milieu, Cupane, 'Audience and reception', 483. Over and above their didactic value or the allegorical interpretations of their content, the fact that ancient and Comnenian novels were perhaps also used as teaching material (see Nilsson and Zagklas, 'The use of Greek novels', 1133–48) may have helped disseminate them to a wider public.

66 Mullet, 'Novelisation', 14–21; Bourbouhakis, Nilsson, 'Byzantine narrative', 269–71; Ch. Messis, 'Fiction and/or novelisation in Byzantine hagiography', in St. Efthymiades (ed.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography* II (Farnham and Burlington 2014) 313–41.

67 I. Nilsson, 'Desire and God have always been around, in life and romance alike', in I. Nilsson (ed.), *Plotting with Eros: Essays on the Poetics of Love and the Erotics of Reading* (Copenhagen 2009) 235–60; eadem, *Raconter Byzance*, 111–33; Messis, 'Fiction and/or novelisation'; Ch. Messis, 'The Palaiologan hagiographies. Saints without romance', in A. Goldwyn and I. Nilsson (eds.), *Reading the Late Byzantine Romance: A Handbook* (Cambridge 2018) 230–53.

68 Mullet, 'Novelisation'; Nilsson, *Raconter Byzance*. Ch. Messis has expressed a quite different opinion about the mutual influence of Palaiologan romances and late Byzantine *vitae*, see 'The Palaiologan hagiographies'.

69 M.-L. Dolezal, M. Mavroudi, 'Theodore Hyrtakenos' description of the garden of St Anna and the ekphrasis of gardens', in A. R. Littlewood et al. (eds), *Byzantine Garden Culture* (Washington, D.C. 2002) 105–58.

70 Dolezal and Mavroudi, 'Theodore Hyrtakenos' description', 140.

by the author to Anne's mental state, thus acquiring the same narrative function as the garden in secular literature and the architectural backdrops in Palaiologan monumental religious painting.⁷¹

Moreover, as far as the twelfth century is concerned, we have an example of a text with religious content which, although not a typical narrative work, nevertheless recounts the Divine Passion in precisely the way we have seen used in the romantic novels and monumental art. And this is *Χριστὸς πάσχω* (*Christos Paschon*), the only surviving 'tragedy' from the Byzantine period. It is a *cento* poem on the Passion of Christ in dialogue form, consisting of more than 2500 iambic verses, mainly based on the tragedies of Euripides, and the majority of which are voiced by the Virgin.⁷² The text constitutes further evidence of twelfth-century interest in the tragic form and has been described as 'a rhetorical recital of unconnected dramatic episodes in narrative form'.⁷³ The minimal action and the unrolling of the story in monumental monologues/laments voiced by the Virgin and other figures, i.e. the rhetorical dramatization of the story of the Passion, undoubtedly has parallels with the way it is rendered in visual terms in contemporary monuments.⁷⁴ Whether or not it can be shown to be true, the notion that dramatized renderings of Holy Scripture, such as *Christos Paschon*, or more generally the rediscovery of drama as a form of narrative discourse in the twelfth century had an important influence on the iconography of narrative scenes remains a seductive hypothesis and an open question awaiting further research.⁷⁵ But what I can assert with confidence is that a contemporary saw the

71 See also K. Stewart, 'Literary landscapes in the Palaiologan romances. An ecocritical approach', in *Reading the Late Byzantine Romance*, 272–98, esp. 285–6.

72 For a recent overview of the text with earlier bibliography, W. Puchner and A. Walker-White, *Greek Theatre between Antiquity and Independence: A History of Reinvention from the Third Century BC to 1830* (Cambridge 2017) 76–80.

73 Agapitos, 'Narrative, rhetoric, and "drama"', 142–3. Whether this *cento* poem was intended for some sort of staged performance, for example if it was recited in a literary salon of the Comnenian aristocracy, or even whether it was meant to be some sort of religious drama, still remains an open question. Some scholars resolutely deny its theatricality, while others find elements of performability in it. The main supporter of the former view is W. Puchner (*Greek Theatre*, 79–80 with earlier bibliography). On the other hand, M. Mullet has suggested that the text 'shows enough awareness of ancient tragedy to suggest more than reading on the page' (communication entitled 'Contexts for the *Christos Paschon*', presented at the 23rd Int. Congress of Byzantine Studies, Belgrade 22–27 August 2016); also 'No drama, no poetry', 228. See also P. Marciniak, *Greek Drama in Byzantine Times* (Katowice 2004) 89–95, esp. 93 n. 39.

74 In making this comparison I am not contending that this particular text directly influenced the religious iconography of the period as Venetia Cottas, *Le Théâtre à Byzance: L'influence du drame 'Christos paschon' sur l'art chrétien d'Orient* (Paris 1931) once maintained, but rather that text and image share a common narrative strategy in depicting the Passion. It should be noted that Cottas' theory never received any endorsement and has been strongly criticised, cf. W. Puchner (with the advice of Nicolaos Conomis), *The Crusader Kingdom of Cyprus – a Theatre Province of Medieval Europe?* (Athens 2006) 28–32.

75 Another interesting case of a 12th-c. text with religious content that adopts the same rhetorical dramatization of a narrative is that of the Homilies of James Kokkinobaphos. The six homilies on the Marian feasts look as if they were composed as a biography of the Virgin, show narrative qualities and are

narrative scenes in a twelfth-century church as dramatized episodes of Holy Writ. I am referring to Nikolaos Mesarites (c.1160–post-1216), who described the mosaics of the Holy Apostles, Constantinople in an *ekphrasis* towards the end of that century.⁷⁶

This text is very well known, as is the whole debate over its relationship not just to lost images, but also to the earlier and briefer description of them by Constantine the Rhodian.⁷⁷ According to Liz James, the simple and laconic description by the Rhodian is accounted for by his tendency to see miracles in the scenes and to show them to his audience, while Mesarites, working in the rhetorical practices of his day, composed an *ekphrasis* in a more colourful and narrative fashion.⁷⁸

However, I believe that Mesarites is doing something more than that. He is writing a novel about the life of Christ, a story composed of independent episodes, which are the scenes from the church he is describing. This story has coherence because he is careful to connect the episodes/scenes up in a causal order, something that is a fundamental characteristic of narrative texts.⁷⁹ This relationship does not rely solely on the chronological order of events, but also on iconographical motifs repeated in the scenes. In other words, in order to move on from the *Baptism* to the next event, the miracle of Christ walking on the waters of Lake Capernaum, Mesarites says that he himself has fallen into the River Jordan and ended up in the Galilean lake, i.e. he connects the events with the iconographical common denominator between the two scenes: water.⁸⁰ At another point the very space of the church itself becomes the link connecting the episodes in the visual narrative because it is the setting in which they

comparable to the contemporary Comnenian novels, K. Linardou, 'The Homilies of Iakovos of the Kokkinobaphou Monastery', in V. Tsamakda (ed.), *A Companion to Byzantine Illustrated Manuscripts* (Leiden and Boston 2017), 389–92.

76 The so-called *Description of the Church of the Holy Apostles at Constantinople* survives in fragmentary form. It was composed by Mesarites, a prelate of the patriarchate, around the end of the 12th c. and probably presented to Patriarch John X Kamateros (1198–1206). For the critical edition of the text, A. Heisenberg, *Grabeskirche und Apostelkirche, zwei Basiliken Konstantins, II. Die Apostelkirche in Konstantinopel* (Leipzig 1908) 10–96; Eng. tr. G. Downey, 'Nikolaos Mesarites, Description of the Church of the Holy Apostles at Constantinople', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* n.s. 47.6 (1957) 855–924, esp. 861–918; *Nicholas Mesarites. His Life and Works (in Translation)*, translated with notes and commentary by Michael Angold (Liverpool 2017). On the interpretation of the text as an encomium of the church and the context of its composition, B. Daskas, 'Nikolaos Mesarites, 'Description of the Church of the Holy Apostles at Constantinople: new critical perspectives', *Parekbolai* 6 (2016) 79–102. On the author, B. Daskas, 'A literary self-portrait of Nikolaos Mesarites', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 40.1 (2016) 151–69; M. Angold, 'Mesarites as a source: then and now', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 40.1 (2016) 55–68.

77 For a presentation of the relevant bibliography, Daskas, 'A literary self-portrait', 152, n. 3, 4; Angold, 'Mesarites as a source', 65–8.

78 L. James (ed.), *Constantine of Rhodes, On Constantinople and the Church of the Holy Apostles, with a new edition of the Greek text by Ioannis Vassis* (Farnham 2012) 216.

79 Abbott, *Narrative*, 37–40.

80 '... But what is happening to me? I have fallen somehow into the depths of the Jordan itself and do not know where I shall make land... and the insatiate desire to see... forces me to steer the skiff of my mind with

unfold. Thus, when finishing his account of the scene of the Women at the Tomb he invites his listeners to hasten with the myrrhophores because: ‘Just as they are making their way to the disciples, the Savior, emerges from some obscure and out of the way corner of the building and welcomes them with the words “All hail”’.⁸¹

After he has connected up all the episodes depicted in the mosaics in such a way as to form a coherent narrative, he sets out the description of each one as a brief drama.⁸² He describes in detail the protagonists, their gestures, movements and expressions and completes the narrative discourse of each episode with the words spoken by the various *dramatis personae*. Sometimes these are dialogues, often only emblematic phrases spoken by Christ, words that set the story and the time rolling in the mind of his audience/readers.⁸³

The close relationship between Mesarites’ descriptions and similar scenes in later monuments has been already noted by some scholars and was taken as evidence for the dating and development of the corresponding iconographic subjects.⁸⁴ Yet once again the text of Mesarites can offer us much more than that. First of all it gives us some hints as to how the audience of such scenes could craft a story out of a series of still pictures, i.e. it gives us space to explore the mental mechanisms that are in play when a Byzantine viewer reads a visual narration. And secondly it demonstrates that the way stories are told, whether in written texts, oral formulations or paintings, is historically and socially contingent. Therefore, as mentioned above, there is little doubt that finding similar evidence of the Byzantine viewer’s response to pictorial narrations would contribute significantly to any attempts to decode visual storytelling in Byzantium.

To sum up, the above analysis has discovered common narrative modes between works of art and literary texts both in the Comnenian period and in the Palaiologan

full sails toward the sea which faces me, Gennesaret, so that I may spend my time on the sights there’: Downey, ‘Nikolaos Mesarites’, 878b.

81 Angold, *Mesarites. His Life and Works*, xxix, 114.

82 Cf. the comment by A. Kazhdan: ‘The same Christological scenes that Constantine (Rhodios) saw as emblems of truth, Nicholas described as emotionally charged fragments of time’: A.P. Kazhdan and A. Wharton-Epstein, *Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Berkeley 1990) 224. B. Daskas has also shown that, in his narrative about the attempted coup by John the Fat, Mesarites constructs the story out a series of *ekphrastic* scenes with similar dramatic content and gives the narration a quasi-theatrical presentation: ‘Images de la ville impériale dans les *ἐκφραστικά διηγήσεις* de Nicolas Mésarites. Le récit sur la révolution de palais’, in P. Odorico and C. Messis (eds), *Villes de toute beauté. L’ekphrasis des cités dans les littératures byzantine et byzantino-slaves* (Paris 2012) 134–48.

83 See for example the scene of Christ Walking on the Water and the Raising of Lazarus (Downey, ‘Nikolaos Mesarites’, 878b–879, 880a–b).

84 T. Baseu-Barabas, *Zwischen Wort und Bild: Nikolaos Mesarites und sein Beschreibung des Mosaikschmucks der Apostelkirche in Konstantinopel* (Vienna 1992); N. Zarras, ‘A gem of artistic ekphrasis: Nicholas Mesarites’ description of the mosaics in the church of the Holy Apostles at Constantinople’, in A. Simpson (ed.), *Byzantium, 1180–1204: ‘The Sad Quarter of a Century’?* (Athens 2015) 261–82, with earlier bibliography.

era. This discovery raises many questions: e.g. Could the rediscovery of drama as poetic discourse and the performative presentation of narrative texts in the literary salons of the Comnenian aristocracy put across the theatrical character of visual narrative in the period? On the other hand could the key to understanding the innovations in the narrative modes of the Palaeologan monumental painting lie in the changes in the reception of literary texts in the late Byzantine period, the probable move to private reading and their dissemination beyond a small circle of educated nobles (unlike in the Comnenian period), changes which have been thought to be possible reasons for the emergence of continuous narrative, the emphasis on dialogue and the importance taken on by the descriptions of space in narrative texts ?

These are seductive hypotheses for further exploration and what is certain is that studying narrative strategies in visual works of art and in literary texts side by side could open up new avenues for a better understanding of both of them.

The Justinianic Plague: an interdisciplinary review

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This article is a detailed critical review of all the major scholarly publications in the rapidly expanding field of the Justinianic Plague published from 2000 through 2018. It updates the article in this journal by Dionysios Stathakopoulos from 2000, while also providing a detailed appraisal of the state of the field across all disciplines, including: literary studies, archaeology, DNA evidence, climatology, and epidemiology. We also identify the current paradigm for the Justinianic Plague as well as survey possible avenues forward for the field in the future.¹

Keywords: Justinianic Plague; pandemics; ancient DNA; climate change; end of Antiquity

Introduction

The Justinianic Plague and the first plague pandemic that followed have enjoyed a substantial increase in scholarly and public attention over the last few decades. This article attempts to offer a useful starting point for scholars in all fields to assess the current state of the study of the Justinianic Plague in hope of increasing interdisciplinary collaboration and raising awareness of key issues while reducing circular reasoning. It builds upon the substantial increase in Justinianic Plague research since the beginning of the 21st century and updates the survey of Dionysios

1 We would like to thank Tim Newfield and the two anonymous reviewers for commenting on an earlier version of this paper. Princeton's Climate Change and History Research Initiative provided an instrumental platform for the refinement and discussion of the ideas behind this paper. This survey is comprehensive through 2018. Due to publication schedules we were able to include only brief references to a few studies from 2019. We use the term 'Justinianic Plague' in this article as a shorthand to refer to all outbreaks of plague from c. 541–750 since that remains the most commonly used term to discuss the first pandemic.

Stathakopoulos published in this journal in 2000.² Studies in multiple fields and disciplines have contributed to this effort. Historians, archaeologists and natural scientists have published on the plague in different venues, enriching their respective fields, which is a welcome development but also one that makes it difficult to remain aware of parallel research.

Over the past two decades, historians have expanded the impact of the plague to include areas beyond the peripheries of the Greco-Roman ancient world and extended its chronological timespan, while the existing material in the written sources has been systematically organized through a catalogue of epidemics. Within the discipline of history, the study of the Justinianic Plague has been incorporated within the growing field of environmental history. Nevertheless, broader bibliographic surveys of premodern environmental history such as Eisenberg et al., McMahon and Sargent, and Newfield and Labuhn cover it in just a few pages. While these overviews are useful starting points for research, they are neither comprehensive nor critical due to their wider scope.³ In the sciences, specialist studies in plague genomics have been appearing at an accelerating rate since 2010. After establishing that *Yersinia pestis* caused the plague, these studies tend to focus on identifying the plague in ancient human remains and reconstructing the pathogen's evolution and genetic composition from the Stone Age to the present. This study critically surveys the main contributions published since Stathakopoulos' article, establishes the current state of research on the topic, highlights the questions that are currently debated, and suggests ways to move forward.

Increasing interest

The recent increase in studies of the Justinianic Plague can be traced to several connected developments around the year 2000. In 2003, after significant scholarly and media attention, the Human Genome Project was completed. Two years earlier, the plague genome was identified and, five years before that, a method to identify the causative microorganism, *Y. pestis*, in the skeletal remains of its human victims was developed. Following these first breakthroughs, an influential multidisciplinary conference was held at the American Academy in Rome in late 2001.⁴ The conference brought together specialists working on late antique plague in different geographical regions,

2 D. Stathakopoulos, 'The Justinianic Plague revisited', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 24 (2000) 256–76.

3 M. Eisenberg et al., 'The environmental history of the Late Antique West', *Late Antique Archaeology* (2018); L. McMahon and A. Sargent, 'Environmental history of the Late Antique Eastern Mediterranean', *Late Antique Archaeology* (2018); T. Newfield and I. Labuhn, 'Realizing consilience in studies of pre-instrumental climate and pre-laboratory disease', *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 48, no. 2 (2017) 218–19.

4 The conference resulted from conversations at the American Academy in Rome two years earlier. See L. Little, 'Preface', in L. Little (ed.) *Plague and the End of Antiquity: The Pandemic of 541–750* (Cambridge 2007) xii.

from the Near East to Ireland, together with others who examined it through scientific and consilient approaches. Some of the studies in this conference would later be published in the primary book dedicated to the Justinianic Plague to date. Delays, however, meant that the book was only published in 2007, postponing the impact of the conference upon the wider scholarly community for several years.⁵

In the meantime, some conference participants continued to advance their research. A key development was the publication of Dionysios Stathakopoulos' book in 2004. This monograph examined two specific types of environmental stress upon human societies in late antiquity: famine and pestilence. The book begins with an interdisciplinary survey of food shortages and epidemics, using historical sources alongside scientific research. The second section is an annotated catalogue of famine and pestilence which remains the most comprehensive survey of the sources to date. Each of the 222 entries includes an estimated timeframe for the event, its location, and relevant primary sources and secondary research, together with Stathakopoulos' own commentary.

Although Stathakopoulos did not focus exclusively on the Justinianic Plague, he paid close attention to it. His chapter on the Justinianic Plague is the longest in the book and, of the 222 events in his catalogue, 16 concern the original outbreak of plague, and another 43 address later plague recurrences. As a result, the innovative monograph remains the best reference work on late antique plague.⁶

Despite its numerous advantages, however, the book and especially the catalogue contained several problems future researchers would replicate. First, how Stathakopoulos identified an epidemic as being a plague remained unclear. While some non-plague epidemics are reported, unknown disease outbreaks are often haphazardly identified as plagues. Stathakopoulos repeatedly accepted weak or circumstantial evidence for plague, often constructing recurrent outbreaks based upon the spatiotemporal proximity of reported epidemics.⁷ Second, in almost all cases, Stathakopoulos paraphrased the primary sources and did not provide the original text. This differs from other catalogues of ancient environmental events and distanced readers from the primary sources.⁸ Third, organizing so many events in a catalogue

5 For the resulting book see Little (ed.), *Plague and the End of Antiquity*.

6 For both his catalogue and his epidemiology section, D. Stathakopoulos, *Famine and Pestilence in the Late Roman and Early Byzantine Empire: A Systematic Survey of Subsistence Crises and Epidemics* (Aldershot 2004) 124–34.

7 See the discussion in Stathakopoulos, *Famine and Pestilence*, 111 which he did not follow in his catalogue. For example, some entries for the first outbreak (e.g. #114–118, pp. 290–4) are based on circumstantial evidence and only one (#114) refers to buboes, but without a specific place.

8 For other catalogues of environmental events that include the primary source text in translation, see for example: N. Ambraseys, *Earthquakes in the Mediterranean and Middle East: A Multidisciplinary Study of Seismicity up to 1900* (Cambridge 2009); E. Guidoboni, *Catalogue of Ancient Earthquakes in the Mediterranean Area up to the 10th Century* (Rome 1994); E. Guidoboni and A. Comastri, *Catalogue of Earthquakes and Tsunamis in the Mediterranean Area from the 11th to the 15th Century* (Rome 2005). The Guidoboni catalogues also include primary sources in the original languages.

created a strong impression of a multitude of disasters ('waves') that struck Eurasia repeatedly over centuries. Moreover, at first glance, the disasters appear equivalent in magnitude and scope, whereas in reality most events were confined to specific locales.

Subsequent publications extended the range of the plague. The most important publication in this regard was Lester Little's edited volume (2007) based on the aforementioned Rome conference. While some of the contributions in the book covered the Eastern Mediterranean, Merovingian Gaul and Anglo-Saxon England, which were by then already familiar in Justinianic Plague scholarship, two chapters examined plague in European peripheries: Spain and Ireland.⁹ In these two cases, as in the paper on England, the authors struggled to overcome the lack of textual sources by examining other types of evidence and basing much of their argument upon chronological correlation. The chapters raised more questions than answers, for example, as to why archaeologists in England have yet to find early medieval rat bones in their sieves, or the startling speed in which the plague apparently moved, reportedly 4.2 km/day on average.¹⁰ These contributions joined earlier publications that identified the plague in other peripheries such as Finland and Yemen, and reinforced the existing framing of the plague as being a global pandemic.¹¹

The chronological scope of the plague was similarly extended. The title of Little's edited volume, 'Plague and the End of Antiquity 541–750', matched the end of Stathakopoulos' catalogue and cemented the chronological extent of the Justinianic Plague in scholarly consensus. The year 750 offered an attractive endpoint to the Justinianic Plague. It had some foundation in the European sources and fitted well with the beginning of the Abbasid and Carolingian Empires.¹² Nevertheless, this chronological limit is not clear cut. Little's book included a chapter by Morony, who examined the Syriac sources and suggested that they could be interpreted to show that

9 M. Kulikowski, 'Plague in Spanish Late Antiquity', in Little (ed.), *Plague and the End of Antiquity*, 150–70; A. Dooley, 'The plague and its consequences in Ireland', in L. Little (ed.), *Plague and the End of Antiquity*, 215–28.

10 J. Maddicott, 'Plague in seventh-century England', in L. Little (ed.), *Plague and the End of Antiquity*, 185–90.

11 T. Seger, 'The plague of Justinian and other scourges: An analysis of the anomalies in the development of the iron age population in Finland', *Formvännan* 77 (1982) 184–96; C.-J. Robin, 'Guerre et épidémie dans les royaumes d'Arabie du Sud, d'après une inscription datée (IIe s. de l'ère chrétienne)', *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* 136, no. 1 (1992) 215–34.

12 This is not to say that 750 was arbitrarily selected, but the emphasis on such a round number as an *anno mirabilis* is tempting. L. I. Conrad, 'Arabic plague chronologies and treatises: Social and historical factors in the formation of a literary genre', *Studia Islamica*, no. 54 (1981) 53, notes the last outbreak in 749; M. Dols, 'Plague in early Islamic history', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 94, no. 3 (1974) 380–81, notes that it was severe under the Umayyads, but plague did seem to continue afterwards as well. See the more recent M. Morony, "For whom does the writer write?": The first bubonic plague pandemic according to Syriac sources', in Little (ed.), *Plague and the End of Antiquity*, 67. Dating the end of the plague in the mid-eighth century goes back to the early twentieth century, but the precise year remains debatable. See: Stathakopoulos, 'The Justinianic plague revisited', 259, 264, 268 and passim.

the plague continued into the mid-ninth century.¹³ This post-750 extension of plague, however, has not been accepted by most subsequent scholars.

Little's book also extended the type of sources used to track and investigate the plague, bringing many of these to the attention of historians. Archaeological evidence featured prominently in several of the contributions and, although generally circumstantial, marked a significant expansion of the source base.¹⁴ Sarris, who had attended the 2001 conference, published an article on the origins and non-literary sources of the plague in 2002. The latter part of his article was an explicit answer to Jean Durliat, who had pointed out the surprising absence of non-literary sources in a 1989 article that remains as influential as the main critical ('minimalist') paper on the Justinianic Plague.¹⁵ Sarris' article was reprinted in Little's volume, making it more accessible to plague scholars.¹⁶ Although Sarris only examines the first outbreak of plague in the early 540s, rather than later plague waves, it remains the main study for non-literary evidence for plague (see below).¹⁷

The 2001 conference also broke new ground by integrating biological data, notably DNA evidence from premodern skeletal assemblages. Michel Drancourt, a molecular biologist who had already worked on the early modern plague, presented a paper at the conference.¹⁸ Although Drancourt did not include his paper in Little's volume, he subsequently published several articles about the evidence for *Y. pestis* in skeletal material he tied to the Justinianic Plague (see below). Little's book did include two important contributions that considered DNA evidence for the plague. Michael McCormick, who would become a leading figure in the field, published the first systematic outline of how pathogenic evidence could help scholars better understand the Justinianic Plague, drawing upon existing investigations of the Black Death. McCormick tried to instill among his fellow historians an awareness of scientific evidence's growing potential ('every passing week deepens biologists' understanding of DNA'). Using DNA evidence, historians could finally determine whether the Justinianic Plague was truly bubonic plague, a question then hotly debated, trace the spread of the disease in human remains, and use rat bones as proxies for

13 Morony, "For whom does the writer write?", 68–9.

14 See, for example, the contributions of H. Kennedy, 'Justinianic plague in Syria and the archaeological evidence', in Little (ed.), *Plague and the End of Antiquity*, 87–98; Maddicott, 'Plague in seventh-century England.'

15 J. Durliat, 'La peste du VI^e siècle: pour un nouvel examen des sources byzantines', in C. Abadie-Reynal, C. Morrisson, and J. Lefort (eds.), *Hommes et richesses dans l'Empire byzantine* (Paris 1989) 107–19.

16 P. Sarris, 'The Justinianic plague: origins and effects', *Continuity and Change* 17,2 (2002) 169–182; P. Sarris, 'Bubonic plague in Byzantium: The evidence of non-literary sources', in Little (ed.), *Plague and the End of Antiquity*, 119–32. Little appears unaware of this, although Sarris noted it in the first footnote in his 2007 chapter. See Little, 'Preface', xiii.

17 See, for example, M. Meier, 'The "Justinianic plague": The economic consequences of the pandemic in the Eastern Roman Empire and its cultural and religious effects', *Early Medieval Europe* 24.3 (2016) 274, 280, who describes it as 'important and highly pertinent'.

18 See Little, 'Preface', xii–xiii.

plague.¹⁹ In another chapter, Robert Sallares used biological, but primarily epidemiological, studies in tandem with historical descriptions of the plague's extent to conclude that the pathogen responsible for the pandemic was *Y. pestis*.²⁰

Little's volume also associated the plague with the end of antiquity. This was not the only book with a title about the end of antiquity and the beginning of the Middle Ages published at around the same time. Others included Chris Wickham's *Framing the Early Middle Ages* and Bryan Ward-Perkins' *The Fall of Rome*, neither of which paid much attention to the plague, clearly disagreeing with the argument that the plague ended antiquity. Although Little himself asserted that 'the time is not yet ripe for a lone author to undertake a continuous and fully integrated narrative', it was only a matter of time until both narratives were brought together.²¹

The first attempt at a synthesis was by William Rosen in his 2007 book *Justinian's Flea*.²² Rosen wrote in sensational language for a public audience and used the plague to explain the fall of the Eastern Roman Empire. In his analysis, the plague weakened the empire so significantly that it easily fell to the Arabs a century later. Rosen was a trade press executive and his work is littered with factual errors, which led historians to disparage or ignore his book.²³ Nevertheless, scientists were more enthusiastic. Reviews of Rosen's book in two of the most prestigious journals of medicine strongly recommended it.²⁴ Although non-historians had published on the Justinianic Plague before, the de facto success of *Justinian's Flea* - according to Google Scholar, the book

19 M. McCormick, 'Toward a molecular history of the Justinianic pandemic', L. Little (ed.), *Plague and the End of Antiquity*, 290–312 [290]. McCormick's notion of continued discoveries in plague studies features in his recent thought as well. See his introduction of Science of the Human Past, *SoHP: Johannes Krause* 2/16/17, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ywIXj46SeUg> at 00:00:15, 00:03:45, 00:04:25, 00:04:35.

20 R. Sallares, 'Ecology, evolution, and epidemiology of plague', in Little (ed.), *Plague and the End of Antiquity*, 231–89.

21 C. Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean 400–800* (Oxford 2005); B. Ward-Perkins, *The Fall of Rome and the End of Civilization* (Oxford 2005); Little, 'Preface', xi–xii.

22 W. Rosen, *Justinian's Flea: Plague, Empire, and the Birth of Europe* (Penguin 2007). Notably, Antoniou and Sinakos' attempt to connect the scientific background for plague, demographic decline, and the end of antiquity was published in a leading Byzantine history journal, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*. Their effort, however, was little noticed. See I. Antoniou and A. Sinakos, 'The sixth-century plague, Its repeated appearance until 746 AD and the explosion of the Rabaul Volcano', *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 98.1 (2008) 1–4.

23 M. Kulikowski, 'Justinian's flea: Plague, empire, and the birth of Europe', *History: Reviews of New Books* 35.4 (2007) 148, described it as being 'a wasted opportunity'; A. Kaldellis, 'Plague and the end of antiquity: The pandemic of 541–750', and: 'Justinian's flea: Plague, empire, and the birth of Europe (Review)', *Journal of Late Antiquity* 1.2 (2008) 385–8, asserted that it 'is full of errors, misunderstandings, and outdated notions'; W. Treadgold, *Review of Justinian's Flea: Plague, Empire, and the Birth of Europe*, by William Rosen, *The Historian* 71.1 (2009) 172–3 claimed that the book 'is so inaccurate and poorly written as almost to give common sense a bad name'.

24 R. Dattwyler, 'Book review', *New England Journal of Medicine* 357, no. 13 (2007) 1354–5; T. Burki, 'Book: Justinian's flea: Plague, empire and the birth of Europe', *The Lancet Infectious Diseases*; London 7.12 (2007).

has been cited in more than 100 studies as of 2018 - signaled that the debate was expanding to include more non-historians than ever before.²⁵

Rosen's book was merely the tip of the iceberg. Following the 2001 conference, plague scholarship has rapidly expanded in at least three different areas: history, archaeology, and genetics. The growing number of methodologies and findings has introduced additional challenges. This development has introduced a rift between scientific and humanistic work on the plague. Scientific publications, for example, are multi-authored and increasingly technical. Since historians are not often trained to analyze scientific methods, especially statistics and 'big data', when working alone, they run the risk of reifying debatable or thin scientific evidence as established facts, resulting in circular reasoning in their own work. Meanwhile, scientists tend to ignore historical nuance, which can be difficult to understand and inaccessible, and base their work on obsolete historiography.²⁶

Since many of the aforementioned fields do not engage with one another, but simply appropriate conclusions, we will examine each of these developments in turn. We will begin with traditional historical sources and non-literary sources. Afterwards, we will examine the developments in epidemiology, mass burials, genetics, and climate. We will continue by investigating demography, the prevailing paradigm, counter-narratives, and then the most recent research. In the last section we address potential future directions for plague research: earlier pandemics, analysis of the cultural effects of the plague, and the proliferation of multidisciplinary online resources. As recent interdisciplinary research suggests, the division between scientific and humanistic fields is resolvable, but will require more collaboration and co-operation between both groups to understand differing methodologies.

Traditional historical sources

The literary historical accounts of the plague narrative that serve as its foundation have been all but exhausted. Scholars have mined the famous accounts of the plague including Procopius, John of Ephesus, Evagrius, and Gregory of Tours, among others, for decades and they will probably yield few new arguments. Detailed discussions of plague passages in these sources have appeared as well, although some of the primary sources still await further nuanced discussion. For example, Bernard Bachrach has explored Gregory's discussions in significant detail, while Averil Cameron has done the same for Procopius.²⁷

25 https://scholar.google.com/scholar?cites=5692900760900037153&cas_sdt=800005&sciodt=0,15&hl=en

26 J. Roosen and D. R. Curtis, 'Dangers of non-critical use of historical plague data', *Emerging Infectious Diseases* 24.1 (2018) 103–10. And for the accessibility question: H. King and M. H. Green, 'On the misuses of medical history', *The Lancet* 391, no. 10128 (7 April 7 2018): 1354–5.

27 On this point, see D. Stathakopoulos, 'Death in the countryside: some thoughts on the effects of famine and epidemics', *Antiquité Tardive* 20 (2012) 107; in more detail: B. Bachrach, 'Plague, population, and economy in Merovingian Gaul', *Journal of the Australian Early Medieval Association* 3 (2007) 29–57; A. Cameron, *Procopius and the Sixth Century* (Berkeley 1985) 39–43.

Other literary genres such as church councils, which discuss changes to burial practices, have also been linked to the plague.²⁸ Compared to the rich historiography on the literary sources of the plague for western Europe and Byzantium, far less scholarship has explored the plague's impact in southwest Asia, Persia or on the early Islamic Empire. If the plague devastated Eurasia, there should be more sources from other locations across southwest Asia in particular, but scholars of this region appear less interested in the plague's effects, with little research appearing over the past two decades.²⁹

The comprehensive analyses of the plague written by Stathakopoulos, and earlier by Biraben and Le Goff, asserted that the plague returned up to 18 times in 'waves' from 541 until the late 740s, which might have reached as far north as Scandinavia and as far south as Yemen.³⁰ Nevertheless, the written evidence for most of these waves remains scant. It is not surprising, therefore, that scholars have increasingly turned to non-literary sources, especially as archaeological and DNA evidence burgeons.

Non-literary historical evidence was a serious gap in the scholarship before 2000. While most research on the plague quoted the literary sources and debated their veracity, non-literary sources enjoyed far less attention. In his 1989 article, Durliat addressed this lacuna explicitly, pointing out the lack of non-literary sources for the Justinianic Plague, establishing a challenge that scholars have sought to resolve for over a decade.³¹

The status quo changed in the early 2000s when Peter Sarris argued for the plague's impact through an analysis of epigraphic, legal, numismatic, and papyrological evidence to create a synthetic picture of the plague's significant socio-economic upheaval. Sarris responded directly to Durliat, but then expanded his analysis further.³² Sarris used this new evidence, combined with the discussions of the plague's origins and impact, to argue that the plague was the culprit behind several ongoing contemporary state problems. By doing so, he established the plague as a central factor in the decline of the East Roman Empire independently from the written sources.³³

Sarris did not discuss the extant relevant inscriptions, a key non-literary source in late antiquity. Two inscriptions that refer specifically to the plague have been found so far,

28 The specific causal link between canons and plague, however, does not necessarily exist, since the vocabulary for plague never appears. See M. McCormick, 'Tracking mass death during the fall of Rome's empire (I)', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 28 (2015) 338, for one example. And see now: H. Gruber, 'Indirect Evidence for the Social Impact of the Justinianic Pandemic: Episcopal Burial and Conciliar Legislation in Visigothic Hispania', *Journal of Late Antiquity* 11 (2018), 193–215.

29 Conrad's works remain indispensable for the region, see: L. I. Conrad, 'The plague in the early Medieval Near East' (Princeton University 1981); L. I. Conrad, 'Die Pest und ihr Soziales Umfeld im Nahen Osten des Frühen Mittelalters', *Der Islam* 73.1 (1996) 81–112.

30 For the waves: Stathakopoulos, *Famine and Pestilence*, 110 his list is at 113–24; for the geographic range: 116.

31 Durliat, 'La peste du VI^e siècle'.

32 Sarris, 'The Justinianic plague', 173–8.

33 Sarris, 'The Justinianic plague', 169–73, 178–9.

with several others referring to anonymous epidemics.³⁴ A more limited analysis of the datable Greek epitaphs in four Byzantine provinces demonstrated that the onset of the plague does coincide with a significant increase in dated epitaphs. The same study found some correlation between the number of known deaths from epitaphs and waves of plague.³⁵ These debates can themselves cause circular reasoning: single site excavations, such as Nessana and Gaza, tend to interpret ambiguous epitaphs dated to the early 540s as belonging to plague victims.³⁶

Epidemiological questions

In an early attempt to move beyond more traditional historical sources, Michael McCormick introduced the study of rats in a seminal article, bringing a significant bibliography to the attention of plague scholars.³⁷ McCormick argued that it was possible to uncover new insights about trade, communications, and the plague by tracking and dating rat remains across the Mediterranean world. He acknowledged that the number of finds was small at the time, but expressed confidence that more research would improve our understanding.³⁸

A closer examination of the historiography reveals that the connection between rats and plagues is assumed to be key, based upon research on the later two plague pandemics - the Second Pandemic (the Black Death), and the worldwide Third Pandemic that began during the 19th century and caused high mortality in India and, to a lesser extent, in China. The Justinianic Plague is almost exclusively compared to the Black Death, which many historians appear to think represents the ‘standard’ way plague behaves.

Although the rat-and-flea model is assumed for the Justinianic Plague, very little evidence exists for it during the sixth-century pandemic. Opponents point out that it is

34 Descriptions and discussions in N. Benovitz, ‘The Justinianic plague: evidence from the dated Greek epitaphs of Byzantine Palestine and Arabia’, *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 27 (2014) 491–2; McCormick, ‘Tracking mass death (I)’, 327–8; Meier, ‘The “Justinianic plague”’, 267–9. The building inscription from Syria is understood to refer to a bubo (πότμον βομβῶνος [sic] καὶ μάλης, which McCormick translates as ‘an evil destiny of bubo and armpit’); an epitaph from Spain mentions that the person died ab inguinali plaga (‘from the affliction of the groin’).

35 Benovitz, ‘The Justinianic plague’, 495–96. The number of dead for 541, the beginning of the first outbreak, is sixteen - double the number of dead in any other year in the studied interval between 300–699.

36 For two examples: H. Colt, *Excavations at Nessana* (Princeton 1962) 168 no. 80 and 179–81 nos. 112–14; C. Glucker, *The City of Gaza in the Roman and Byzantine Periods* (Oxford 1987) 124–7 nos. 9–11. Glucker’s proof of plague is a citation to Colt, who simply made the suggestion, but left the question open.

37 M. McCormick, ‘Rats, communications, and plague: Toward an ecological history’, *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 34, no. 1 (2003) 1–25; see also D. Stathakopoulos, ‘Invisible protagonists: The Justinianic plague from a zoocentric point of view’, in E. Anagnostakis, T. Kolias, and E. Papadopoulou (eds.), *Ζῳα και περιβάλλον στο Βυζάντιο (7ος-12ος αι.) = Animals and Environment in Byzantium (7th-12th c.)*, 87–95 (Athens 2011) 87–95.

38 McCormick, ‘Rats, communications, and plague’, 9 knew of 65 finds of rat bones until the eighth century CE.

based on a specific well-recorded case: the Third Pandemic in Bombay (modern Mumbai) in the early twentieth century.³⁹ Third Pandemic outbreaks elsewhere, for instance in Glasgow in 1900, reveal low numbers of rats and very low ratios of infected to non-infected rats.⁴⁰ A broader survey found only five cases of historical plague (pre-1800) in which primary sources mentioned rats.⁴¹ Moreover, as Samuel Cohn repeatedly argued, the epidemiology of the devastating Second Pandemic does not fit the Third Pandemic.⁴² The discrepancies between the mortality and the effects of these pandemics, present in the debates surrounding the Black Death, are largely unmentioned by historians of the Justinianic Plague.⁴³

While research into the Justinianic Plague remains focused on the rat-and-flea model, scholars of the Black Death have proposed two alternative models. These could theoretically fit the Justinianic Plague, but the lack of evidence from late antiquity prevents scholars from testing them more thoroughly.

The first alternative associates the first pandemic with pneumonic plague emphasizes pneumonic plague as being the etiology for the pandemic. Its proponents stress that there is almost no textual and archaeological evidence for rats, since the rat-and-flea model would require very high numbers of commensal rats. They hypothesize that outbreaks in humans quickly became pneumonic, allowing humans to infect each other directly. Pneumonic plague is attractive for explaining historical pandemics because of its core features, namely its quick progression (death comes 1–3 days after onset of first symptoms) and its mortality rate (near 100%). Opponents of the pneumonic plague model point out that there is little historical evidence for major outbreaks of pneumonic plague. The only known large-scale examples occurred in Manchuria in the early twentieth century in unique environmental and demographic contexts. Although tens of thousands died, it was a result of rather specific conditions, living in close quarters and unsanitary conditions, which

39 K. Royer, 'The blind men and the elephant: Imperial medicine, medieval historians and the role of rats in the historiography of plague', *Medicine and Colonialism* (2014) 113–24. Royer points out that even in India the Third Pandemic varied in its epidemiology and notes that historians prefer to seek a one-size-fits-all explanation for complex and protean biological phenomena. For a recent study about the Black Death, see: K. Dean et al., 'Human ectoparasites and the spread of plague in Europe during the Second Pandemic', *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 115.6 (2018) 1304–9.

40 K. Dean, F. Krauer, and B. Schmid, 'Epidemiology of a bubonic plague outbreak in Glasgow, Scotland in 1900', *Royal Society Open Science* 6.1 (2019) 3.

41 Sallares, 'Ecology, evolution, and epidemiology of plague', 269. This work does not appear to be comprehensive and Sallares maintained his support for the rat-and-flea model.

42 S. Cohn, 'The Black Death: end of a paradigm', *The American Historical Review* 107.3 (2002) 703–38; S. Cohn, 'Epidemiology of the Black Death and successive waves of plague', *Medical History. Supplement*, no. 27 (2008) 75–77, also discusses the discrepancies between the Justinianic Plague and the Third Pandemic; see also P. Horden, 'Mediterranean plague in the age of Justinian', in M. Maas (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian* (Cambridge 2005) 134–60; Royer, 'The blind men and the elephant'.

43 While Stathakopoulos, *Famine and Pestilence*, 112 suggests that the next two pandemics should be studied, he cited nine recent works on the Black Death, but only one (from 1936) on the Third Pandemic.

facilitated the spread of pneumonic plague. Moreover, the high virulence of pneumonic plague would normally prevent it from disseminating quickly, since it would kill people faster than they could infect others.⁴⁴

The second alternative accepts that plague was mostly bubonic, but instead of rats and fleas, it asserts that the hosts and vectors were respectively humans and human ectoparasites (e.g. human fleas and lice).⁴⁵ While this is an attractive explanation, since it overcomes the lack of evidence for the rat-and-flea model, it is difficult, if not impossible, to prove since it does not (and arguably cannot) provide any positive evidence. Moreover, opponents of this model point out that human fleas seem to be inefficient plague vectors.⁴⁶

Since these possibilities are intractable for the moment, recent studies of the Black Death instead use mathematical mortality models based upon specific city outbreak data and try to match modern epidemiological knowledge with medieval temporal mortality patterns.⁴⁷ Disregarding arguments against such methodologies, a similar approach to the Justinianic Plague is impossible since there is no comparable detailed demographic dataset.

A final question about the epidemiology of the Justinianic Plague relates to its geographical origins. Prokopios mentions that the plague started in Pelusium, in the eastern Nile Delta. Most scholars accept this information, but they disagree about whether the plague arrived there from sub-Saharan Africa or Central Asia.⁴⁸ More

44 J. Kool, 'Risk of person-to-person transmission of pneumonic plague', *Clinical Infectious Diseases: An Official Publication of the Infectious Diseases Society of America* 40.8 (2005) 1166–72. For an argument against pneumonic, see E. Begier et al., 'Pneumonic plague cluster, Uganda, 2004', *Emerging Infectious Diseases* 12.3 (2006) 460–67.

45 See, for example, M. Drancourt, L. Houhamdi, and D. Raoult, 'Yersinia Pestis as a telluric, human ectoparasite-borne organism', *The Lancet Infectious Diseases* 6, no. 4 (2006) 234–41; A. Hufthammer and L. Walløe, 'Rats cannot have been intermediate hosts for Yersinia Pestis during medieval plague epidemics in Northern Europe', *Journal of Archaeological Science* 40, no. 4 (2013) 1752–59; L. Houhamdi and D. Raoult, 'Different genes govern Yersinia Pestis pathogenicity in Caenorhabditis Elegans and human lice', *Microbial Pathogenesis* 44.5 (2008) 435–37; R. Piarroux et al., 'Plague epidemics and lice, Democratic Republic of the Congo', *Emerging Infectious Diseases* 19.3 (2013) 505–6.

46 Cohn, 'Epidemiology', 95–7; B. M. S. Campbell, *The Great Transition* (Cambridge 2016) 232–3.

47 See for example K. Dean, 'Modeling plague transmission in medieval European cities' (University of Oslo, 2015), <https://www.duo.uio.no/bitstream/handle/10852/45490/KDPlagueThesis.pdf?sequence=9>; Dean et al., 'Human ectoparasites'.

48 Although historians were well aware that they could not resolve this question by themselves, they made arguments for both places of origin. C. Tsiamis, E. Poulakou-Rebelakou and E. Petridou, 'The Red Sea and the port of Clysma. A possible gate of Justinian's Plague', *Gesnerus* 66.2 (2009) 209–17, argued that plague reached Pelusium through the port of Clysma in the Red Sea; For an African origin, see Sarris, 'Bubonic Plague in Byzantium', 120–3. For a central Asian origin, see for example: M. Green et al., 'Yersinia Pestis and the three plague pandemics', *The Lancet Infectious Diseases; London* 14.10 (2014) 918; V. Kutyrev et al., 'Phylogeny and classification of Yersinia Pestis through the lens of strains from the plague foci of Commonwealth of Independent States', *Frontiers in Microbiology* 9 (2018) 1106.

recent biological and DNA research appears to have settled the question in favour of a central Asian origin.⁴⁹

At this point, it might be worth asking how these debates, which have consumed a great deal of scholarly energy, have advanced our understanding of the Justinianic Plague's effects upon the Mediterranean world. After all, neither suggest anything about the broader political, social, and cultural effects of the plague.⁵⁰ As more research on the Black Death and Third Pandemic accumulated, it became clear that even identifying the pathogen as *Y. pestis* did little to clarify some of the most basic questions about plague epidemiology or the late antique plague experience. Although rarely appearing in print, opponents of these debates tend to suggest that the attention to technical epidemiological questions moves the focus of research away from the actual effects of the plague upon the human societies that experienced it.⁵¹

Mass burials

A potentially more promising approach is to examine the archaeological evidence for the plague. Since Black Death plague victims have often been found in large mass graves, some scholars have argued that Justinianic-era mass graves might similarly contain plague victims. Yet, reaching any conclusion is difficult as the archaeological burial and DNA evidence is difficult to interpret. For example, the first DNA evidence thought to be relevant to the Justinianic Plague was extracted from human remains from France, which were tested because they were buried in a mass grave that appeared to have been hastily dug. Although archaeologists working on the site were reluctant to connect all the victims to the plague, a few of the remains tested positive for *Y. pestis*. Subsequent tests revealed that these results were probably contaminated. This would not preclude further tests on French sites or new finds in France with possible archaeological evidence of plague victims, although no such tests have been published on Justinianic Plague remains since 2007.⁵²

49 Y. Cui et al., 'Historical variations in mutation rate in an epidemic pathogen, *Yersinia Pestis*', *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 110.2 (2013) 577–82. The conclusion has been accepted by historians, e.g. M. Green, 'Taking "pandemic" seriously: making the Black Death global,' *The Medieval Globe* 1 (2014) 36–7; N. Varlık, *Plague and Empire in the Early Modern Mediterranean World: The Ottoman Experience, 1347–1600* (Cambridge 2015) 19–20 (emphasizing the origins of rats); K. Harper, *The Fate of Rome: Climate, Disease, and the End of an Empire* (Princeton 2017), 210–14.

50 Such questions have been asked, for instance by: Horden, 'Mediterranean plague'; J. Hays, 'Historians and epidemics: Simple questions, complex answers', in Little (ed.), *Plague and the End of Antiquity*, 42ff.

51 See, for example, the hints in Horden, 'Mediterranean plague', 143ff and his stronger conclusion that the Justinianic Plague 'absorbs a great deal of our energy; it gives very little out' (p. 157).

52 For the positive DNA tests, see M. Drancourt et al., '*Yersinia Pestis Orientalis* in remains of ancient plague patients', *Emerging Infectious Diseases* 13, no. 2 (2007) 332–3; and for the archaeological evidence: M. Signoli et al., 'Une sépulture de pestiférés du Haut Moyen Âge à Vienne (Isère)', *Archéologie du Midi médiéval* 27.1 (2009) 19–29. See now also Keller et al. 'Ancient *Yersinia pestis* genomes from

More recently, Michael McCormick has catalogued dozens of mass graves (defined as five individuals or more) across the late antique Mediterranean world in order to understand the phenomenon of mass burial.⁵³ He was able to link some mass graves to the general timing of various plague outbreaks, with an increase in their frequency over time. Upon closer examination, however, the connection between the location of the mass graves and independent historical or archaeological evidence of high plague mortality is weak, if it even exists. McCormick himself acknowledged that burial practices were probably more nuanced, suggesting that mass graves might be an urban burial practice, while we might expect to find rural plague victims in single graves.⁵⁴

Subsequent research raised other doubts about McCormick's hypothesis altogether. First, there is the need to differentiate between mass graves and multiple burials, since large graves from the Black Death were hastily dug while graves from the first pandemic period, especially in Western Europe, contained grave goods in 'standard' Merovingian style. Secondly, multiple inhumations in the same graves were a normative burial practice in locations throughout the late and post-Roman and Byzantine worlds.⁵⁵ As a whole, mass graves could be proxies for the Justinianic Plague, but more supporting evidence is required to confirm this hypothesis.

Aside from mass graves and epigraphy, archaeology has been used in a variety of ways to debate the spread, mortality, and virulence of the plague. Both Chris Wickham's and Michael McCormick's syntheses of the late antique Mediterranean have traced the slow disintegration of Roman trade networks and its fracturing into smaller regional connections. Demographic decline, due to the plague, may have played a role in this process, but neither scholar places it as a central driver. If it is mentioned, the plague is one of many changes during the transition from the ancient to the medieval world.⁵⁶

Similarly, scholars have generally not connected most regional transformations to the plague. Syria is a case in point. While a few scholars, such as Hugh Kennedy, have dated the decline in Syrian rural and urban sites to the mid-sixth century, and causally

across Western Europe reveal early diversification during the First Pandemic (541–750)', *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 116.25 (2019) 12363–12372.

53 McCormick, 'Tracking mass death (I)'; M. McCormick, 'Tracking mass death during the fall of Rome's empire (II): A first inventory of mass graves', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 29 (2016) 1004–7, for the catalogue of mass graves.

54 McCormick, 'Tracking mass death (I)', 333.

55 D. Gutschmidt-Schumann et al., 'Digging up the plague: A diachronic comparison of aDNA confirmed plague burials and associated burial customs in Germany', *Præhistorische Zeitschrift* 92.2 (2018), 408, 410, 416; E. Ivison, 'Burial and urbanism at Late Antique and early Byzantine Corinth (c. AD 400–700)', in N. Christie and S. T. Loseby (eds.), *Towns in Transition: Urban Evolution in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Brookfield, VT 1996), 108–10, 112–14; T. Schneider, 'Mehrfachbestattungen von Männern in der Merowingerzeit', *Zeitschrift für Archäologie des Mittelalters* 36 (2008) 1–32, for Merovingian graves in particular.

56 Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages*; M. McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy: Communications and Commerce, A.D. 300–900* (Cambridge 2001).

linked it to the plague, many others disagree.⁵⁷ Historians such as Jairus Banaji and archaeologists who have excavated numerous sites in Palestine and Syria, such as Gideon Avni and Jodi Magness, found no evidence of decline due to the plague or any other ‘disaster’, but rather continuous, intensified occupation.⁵⁸ Further archaeological evidence would need to be compared in different regions to identify any broad plague effect. In the current state of debate, it remains difficult to use material culture as a causal link between the plague and demographic collapse.

Identifying and reconstructing Late Antique *Yersinia pestis*

Perhaps the seminal question about the plague for most of the early twenty-first century was whether the pathogen behind the Justinianic Plague was really the *Y. pestis* bacterium. The heated debates were based upon historical, archaeological, and modern epidemiological comparative cases, but remained inconclusive until ancient DNA (aDNA) finds firmly associated *Y. pestis* with the Justinianic Plague.⁵⁹

Over the past two decades, aDNA evidence has become a useful resource to identify premodern plague cases. This evidence is extracted from the dental pulp of teeth from skeletal remains found in archaeological excavations. Initial analyses were performed in the late 1990s and were focused on late medieval and early modern human remains, but these tests quickly expanded to include remains dated to late antiquity. Michel Drancourt and his collaborators first identified plague remnants from skeletal remains in France and subsequently claimed to have found evidence of plague in graves in Vienne and Poitiers, France.⁶⁰ Although later research indicated Drancourt’s results were flawed due to insufficient anti-contamination protocols, his team pioneered the testing of mass burial sites for plague and his colleagues and students have continued to publish on sites in France and Italy.⁶¹

57 Kennedy, ‘Justinianic Plague in Syria’.

58 G. Avni, *The Byzantine-Islamic Transition in Palestine: An Archaeological Approach* (Oxford 2014); J. Magness, *The Archaeology of the Early Islamic Settlement in Palestine* (Winona Lake, IN 2003).

59 The connection between *Y. pestis* and the historical pandemics was assumed until called into question in 1984. For a review of the debate, see L. Little, ‘Plague historians in lab coats’, *Past & Present* 213.1 (2011): 272ff. For a useful review of scientific research on plague, see K. Gage and M. Kosoy, ‘Natural history of plague: Perspectives from more than a century of research’, *Annual Review of Entomology* 50 (2005) 505–28. See below for a survey of ancient DNA, which is comprehensive through August 2018, but only discusses a few key updates afterward.

60 M. Drancourt et al., ‘Genotyping, Orientalis-like *Yersinia Pestis*, and plague pandemics’, *Emerging Infectious Diseases* 10, no. 9 (2004) 1585–92; for Vienne: Drancourt et al., ‘*Yersinia Pestis Orientalis*’. For Poitiers, see: D. Castex and S. Kacki, ‘Demographic patterns distinctive of epidemic cemeteries in archaeological samples’, *Microbiology Spectrum* 4, no. 4 (2016), which is based on material culture remains and not DNA.

61 For problems: G. Vergnaud, ‘*Yersinia Pestis* genotyping’, *Emerging Infectious Diseases* 11.8 (2005) 1317–19; M. Prentice, T. Gilbert, and A. Cooper, ‘Was the Black Death caused by *Yersinia Pestis*?’, *The Lancet. Infectious Diseases* 4.2 (2004) 72; and most notably: M. T. P. Gilbert et al., ‘Absence of *Yersinia*

Another group of researchers based in Germany has been performing aDNA analysis at two Bavarian cemeteries: Aschheim and Altenerding, which are approximately twenty miles apart. Ingrid Wiechmann and Gisela Grupe first identified *Y. pestis* in 2005 at Aschheim and later studies confirmed its presence using more rigorous techniques.⁶² Michal Feldman and colleagues have more recently confirmed the presence of the plague at Altenerding, although their study noted a number of variances when compared against the Aschheim genome data that would suggest problems in data collection at one or both of the sites.⁶³ A recent article by Marcel Keller and his colleagues has isolated *Y. pestis* DNA from approximately 45 individuals in central and western Europe dating to late antiquity.⁶⁴ Doris Gutschmiedl-Schumann and colleagues have noted that it remains difficult to fit the aDNA evidence with the independent archaeological evidence from these burials. Not only were existing burial traditions maintained, but some of those who tested positive for plague were in fact among the richest graves in both cemeteries. In the words of the authors, ‘there are no archeological indications that these people died of the plague’.⁶⁵

As a complicating factor, the teams working on aDNA rarely include historians and often base their work on outdated historiography. On the other hand, historians often lack the technical knowledge required to assess the robustness of the scientific data. In addition, they tend to cite and discuss the Bavarian evidence in more detail and more frequently than the French and other cases. However, the French archaeological evidence is entirely ignored even though it could provide useful comparative evidence for burial methods.

Pestis- specific DNA in human teeth from five European excavations of putative plague victims’, *Microbiology* 150.2 (2004) 341–54. M. Harbeck et al., ‘Yersinia Pestis DNA from skeletal remains from the 6th century AD reveals insights into Justinianic Plague’, *PLOS Pathogens* 9.5 (2013); further critiqued Drancourt et al.’s 2007 paper. On more recent French work, see the special journal issue edited by: M. Drancourt and D. Raoult (eds.), *Paleomicrobiology of Humans* (Washington, D.C. 2016). For a personal discussion of these debates, see D. Raoult, ‘A personal view of how paleomicrobiology aids our understanding of the role of lice in plague pandemics’, *Microbiology Spectrum* 4.4 (2016). On Italy and France from the High Middle Ages: T-N-N. Tran et al., ‘High throughput, multiplexed pathogen detection authenticates plague waves in medieval Venice, Italy’, *PLoS ONE* 6.3 (2011); T-N-N. Tran et al., ‘Brief communication: Co-detection of Bartonella Quintana and Yersinia Pestis in an 11th-15th burial site in Bondy, France’, *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 145.3 (2011): 489–94.

62 I. Wiechmann and G. Grupe, ‘Detection of Yersinia pestis DNA in two early medieval skeletal finds from Aschheim (Upper Bavaria, 6th century A.D.)’, *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 126.1 (2005): 48–55; Harbeck et al., ‘Yersinia Pestis DNA’; D. Wagner, ‘Yersinia Pestis and the plague of Justinian 541–543 AD: A genomic analysis’, *The Lancet Infectious Diseases* 14.4 (2014): 319–26.

63 M. Feldman et al., ‘A high-coverage Yersinia Pestis genome from a sixth-century Justinianic Plague victim’, *Molecular Biology and Evolution* 33.11 (2016): 2911–23.

64 Keller et al. ‘Ancient Yersinia pestis genomes from across Western Europe’, has the total numbers.

65 Gutschmiedl-Schumann et al., ‘Digging up the plague’. The quote is from p. 410 and refers to the Aschheim cemetery, although the same phenomenon is discussed for Altenerding as well.

Most aDNA studies focus their efforts on confirming the presence of *Y. pestis* and then placing it on the phylogenetic tree of *Y. pestis* - a graphic representation of the relationship between all known modern and premodern plague strains. This allows scientists to trace connections between plague outbreaks which has in turn advanced scholarship significantly. A few decades ago the plague was divided into three theoretical biovars – antiqua, mediaevalis, and orientalis – which were supposedly connected to the three pandemics.⁶⁶ Studies over the past twenty years have rejected this division, showing that the plague developed and branched off repeatedly during its history. Multiple studies since the beginning of the decade, including the most recent research, agree that the Justinianic Plague strains are not directly ancestral to later strains, which could mean that late antique plague was not established in multiple, long-lived or highly active reservoirs.⁶⁷ This issue further hinders any attempt to model the impact of the Justinianic Plague. Any extrapolation from the genetics of premodern plague strains to the mortality, virulence, and epidemiology of premodern plague is, therefore, problematic. Late antique and late medieval plague strains were capable of being rat-borne and flea-transmitted, but that need not mean they principally were.

Climate and plague

In recent decades, climatic changes have been raised as a major causal agent in the appearance and spread of premodern pandemics. In its many reservoirs, plague has been argued to have a connection with climate. Climate affects the wild sylvatic rodents that maintain plague foci. Plague ecologists, working with paleoclimatologists, have attempted on several occasions to work backward, using modern knowledge to speculate on the impact of climate upon past plague foci. While the connection had been hypothesized based on historical sources, Ulf Büntgen's research group recently synthesized evidence from multiple types of paleoclimate proxies (e.g. tree rings, lake sediments, etc.) and from earlier scholarship to demonstrate the centrality of a series of volcanic eruptions from the mid-530s through the late 540s to an overall

66 R. Deignat, 'Variétés de l'espèce *Pasteurella Pestis*', *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* 4.2 (1951) 247–63.

67 For the most recent phylogenetic trees, see P. de Barros Damgaard et al., '137 ancient human genomes from across the Eurasian steppes', *Nature* 557, no. 7705 (2018) fig. 9 (Extended Data); and the synthesis with several descriptions of branches on the larger tree in Kutyrev et al., 'Phylogeny and classification'. Another updated version is in pre-print: Zhou, et al., 'The user's guide to comparative genomics with Enterobase. Three case studies: micro-clades within *Salmonella enterica* serovar Agama, ancient and modern populations of *Yersinia pestis*, and core genomic diversity of all *Escherichia*', *bioRxiv* (2019). For discussions, see Green et al., 'Yersinia Pestis and the three plague pandemics'; G. Sussman, 'Scientists doing history: Central Africa and the origins of the First Plague Pandemic', *Journal of World History* 26.2 (2016) 325–54.

transformation in Northern Hemispheric climate. This period of cooling was termed the ‘Late Antique Little Ice Age’ and was connected to various events from the Justinianic Plague through the Arab invasions of the Near East in the 630s.⁶⁸

Building upon the work of Büntgen’s research group, Kyle Harper associated this mid-sixth-century temperature downturn with increased epidemic mortality alongside the population’s greater susceptibility to disease because of agricultural crises. This implicitly follows the Second Pandemic model, in which the Black Death followed the Great Famine and perhaps caused increased mortality due to earlier shortages. Harper firmly linked the first emergence of the Justinianic Plague to volcanic activity in the year 536, which created a ‘year without summer’ and the perfect incubation for the plague’s emergence.⁶⁹

While these correlations are notable, the causation between climate, weather, and plague remain unclear.⁷⁰ Most studies assume a uniform change to climate across all plague affected regions and that colder, wetter weather is the best driver despite the lack of consensus on the weather’s impact upon plague.⁷¹ In contrast, others have suggested warmer weather and wetter summers or cooling after an unusually warm sequence of summers in the 520s were more conducive for spreading the plague.⁷² Perhaps most importantly, micro-regions are more useful vehicles to understand climate change. Asia Minor alone, for example, has at least seven sub-regional zones, with significant climatic variability even within these zones. Climate changes have

68 U. Büntgen et al., ‘Cooling and societal change during the Late Antique Little Ice Age from 536 to around 660 AD’, *Nature Geoscience* 9.3 (2016) 231–6. For previous linkages between plague and climate, see N. Stenseth et al., ‘Plague dynamics are driven by climate variation’, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 103.35 (2006) 13110–15; B. Schmid et al., ‘Climate-driven introduction of the Black Death and successive plague re-introductions into Europe’, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 112.10 (2015) 3020–3025.

69 Harper, *The Fate of Rome*, 167–75, 218–20; K. Harper, ‘Invisible environmental history: Infectious disease in Late Antiquity’, *Late Antique Archaeology*, (2018). The catastrophist-determinist connection between the volcanic activity and the ensuing societal disruption and collapse world was discussed in a sensational form by Keys almost two decades ago. See D. Keys, *Catastrophe: An Investigation into the Origins of the Modern World* (London 1999). For a more scholarly approach, which lacked some of the data now available, see: A. Arjava, ‘The mystery cloud of 536 CE in the Mediterranean sources’, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 59 (2005) 73–94.

70 On the difficulties in establishing such a connection, see: T. Newfield, ‘Mysterious and mortiferous clouds: The climate cooling and disease burden of Late Antiquity’, *Late Antique Archaeology* (2018).

71 L. Xu et al., ‘Wet climate and transportation routes accelerate the spread of human plague’, *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* 281, no. 1780 (2014) 1–9; also, T. Snäll, R. E. Benestad, and N. C. Stenseth, ‘Expected future plague levels in a wildlife host under different scenarios of climate change’, *Global Change Biology* 15.2 (2009) 500–7.

72 Stenseth et al., ‘Plague dynamics’ for warmer springs and wetter summers; Schmid et al., ‘Climate-driven introduction of the Black Death’ for cooling after a warm period.

affected each of these regions in a variety of ways across the centuries.⁷³ Drawing simple causal conclusions from Eurasian-wide climate changes is problematic.

Moreover, recent studies of the ongoing Third Pandemic (c. 1850-present) suggest that micro-climates are more important than continent-wide climate change in influencing the plague's spread. Lei Xu's study suggested that wetter and drier weather, and colder and hotter climates, may all help spread the plague depending on complex variable interaction within different micro-environments. Parts of northern and southern China, for example, had all types of weather, which both helped and hindered the plague's spread and mortality.⁷⁴ These findings suggest that a simple correlation between colder weather and the plague's first outbreak in 541–542 is uncertain at best, if not unfounded.⁷⁵

Demographic effects

Scholars have attempted to quantify the late antique demographic decline plague caused, which is, perhaps, the central question driving all plague studies. If severe demographic contraction could be linked to the Justinianic Plague, it would help answer many questions regarding contemporary changes in land use and the extent of arable agriculture, urban decline, tax revenue, and reduced army size, among many other issues. Depending on its ability to cause high mortality, the late antique plague could have had cascading effects that may have persisted for centuries. Scholars differ in how they discuss mortality, with some preferring blanket statements for the entire Byzantine Empire and others differentiating between cities and rural areas or between Constantinople and other cities. Although scholars examining mortality rates all use the same data, they reach varying conclusions and rarely explain their reasoning. These attempts to estimate plague mortality and the ensuing demographic effects have not changed methodologically before or after Stathakopoulos' 2000 article.⁷⁶ Surprisingly, few critical studies have proposed holistic demographic models through extrapolations from known data.

Stathakopoulos was relatively careful in his analysis and suggested a mortality rate of about twenty percent in Constantinople during the first outbreak, but was otherwise reluctant to give numbers or percentages, although he believed it was a key event in

73 J. Haldon et al., 'The climate and environment of Byzantine Anatolia: Integrating science, history, and archaeology', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 45.2 (2014) 113–61; A. Izdebski, *A Rural Economy in Transition: Asia Minor from Late Antiquity into the Early Middle Ages* (Warsaw 2013).

74 L. Xu et al., 'Nonlinear effect of climate on plague during the Third Pandemic in China', *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 108.25 (2011) 10214–19; Xu et al., 'Wet climate and transportation routes'.

75 On this, and for a broader nuanced discussion about the connection between plague and climate, see Newfield, 'Mysterious and mortiferous clouds: The climate cooling and disease burden of Late Antiquity.'

76 Stathakopoulos, 'The Justinianic Plague revisited', 262ff.

the demographic development of the Byzantine state.⁷⁷ Horden suggested that the mortality was around twenty to thirty percent of the Mediterranean population, while Antoniou and Sinakos accept that a third of the capital's population died and between a sixth and a tenth of the overall population.⁷⁸ Notably, these numbers seem to increase significantly in papers scientists write. Already in 2005, in his study on the epidemiology of pneumonic plague, Kool asserted that almost one hundred million people died.⁷⁹ David Wagner similarly estimated that one hundred million people died and a mortality rate of between fifteen and forty percent for the entire empire in subsequent outbreaks.⁸⁰ Harper, the most significant recent contributor to the debate (see below), suggested an initial fifty percent population reduction in the Eastern Roman Empire (of a thirty million total population) followed by subsequent ten percent mortality every fifteen years thereafter.⁸¹

Existing paradigm

The rapid research progress in different fields of the Justinianic Plague has until recently hindered efforts to synthesize the current state of the field into a narrative. Stephen Mitchell's survey of the later Roman Empire argued in favour of significant mortality from the initial outbreak in the 540s through the reign of Heraclius (610–41). Mitchell's synthesis compiled examples from all the relevant sources – literary, epigraphic, archaeological, and demographic – into a narrative that cautiously, but demonstrably, favoured a pessimistic outcome for the empire. Mitchell concentrated on the archaeological evidence across the Mediterranean, in which he saw rapid signs of decline in almost every region.⁸² While he was careful to note the ongoing debate

77 Stathakopoulos, *Famine and Pestilence*, 139–41; repeated in D. Stathakopoulos, 'Population, demography, and disease,' in E. Jeffreys, J. Haldon and R. Cormack (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies* (Oxford 2008) 310. An estimate found separately in C. Zuckerman, *Du village à l'empire: autour du registre fiscal d'Aphroditô (525/526)* (Paris 2004), 189–212 but who noted the population seems to have rebounded within a decade.

78 Horden, 'Mediterranean plague', 149; Antoniou and Sinakos, 'The sixth-century plague.'

79 Kool, 'Risk of person-to-person transmission', 1166. The number is not cited in Kool's source for the paragraph.

80 Wagner, 'Yersinia Pestis and the Plague of Justinian.' Their estimate is based upon Procopius' *Secret History*, which they admit 'is disputed'.

81 Harper, *The Fate of Rome*, 244.

82 S. Mitchell, *A History of the Later Roman Empire, AD 284–641*, 2nd edn (Chichester 2015), 410–13, 479–91. Notably, Mitchell divides sites between pre-and post-550 dating to suggest that a demographic decline is a direct result of the plague. However, the imprecision in dating material culture through archaeological evidence, alongside the other potential causes for demographic decline in the mid-sixth century, cast doubt on these conclusions. J-P. Devoery, 'Catastrophe, crise et changement social: à propos des paradigmes d'interprétation du développement médiéval (500–1100)', in L. Buchet, C. Rigeade and I. Séguy (eds.), *Actes des 9e Journées Anthropologiques de Valbonne* (Valbonne 2009) argues for an increase in uncultivated land starting already in the third century in the west, which might have accelerated due to further declines in the sixth century.

over the plague's impact, his maximalist narrative promoted the plague as being one of the causes of the 'end' of the Eastern Roman Empire.

The most recent synthesis of these diverse areas of research is Kyle Harper's *Fate of Rome*, published in 2017. Harper expanded Peter Sarris and Michael McCormick's academic maximalist paradigm, which remains the normative position of the field, with a popular writing style aimed at a wider audience.⁸³ He connected all the pieces of evidence - literary, non-literary, archaeology, rat remains, aDNA, and natural climate archives - to synthesize the narrative of the end of Rome. Using wonderfully evocative language, Harper argued for three devastating pandemics: the Antonine Plague, the Cyprian Plague, and the Justinianic Plague. Together with an oddly defined Late Antique Little Ice Age, these disease events are deterministically cast as eroding the empire's population and leading to the end of the ancient world. His book is the first synthesis to grapple with the transformation of the entire late antique world through the lens of disease and climate.⁸⁴

Counter arguments

Most critiques of plague research focus upon the direction of historiographical debate rather than on plague evidence. Peregrine Horden, for example, discussed the plague evidence, only to suggest that the entire debate focused on the wrong questions. According to Horden, the plague simply confirms the presence of existing trade networks – for which archaeological and material culture remains are far more plentiful – and the debate about plague itself reveals little more about the sixth-century world.⁸⁵

After Durliat's 1989 article, few revisionists have engaged with the substantial arguments plague maximalists have compiled over the past few decades.⁸⁶ A debate about the plague's effects does not exist in practice. The disagreement with the existing maximalist plague paradigm is confined to an abstract argument based on principle, rather than evidence and its interpretation. Mark Whittow, for example, dismissed the plague's effects in a few short pages, while Chris Wickham's overview of medieval history noted the incongruity between the dynamic economic situation in the sixth-century Eastern Mediterranean and the plague's supposed massive impact. Both scholars disagree on the extent of the plague's consequences, but neither countered more recent analyses, notably Sarris' arguments, nor proposed an alternative.⁸⁷ Most revisionist scholarship on the plague remains limited to a brief rejection of the

83 For the originals: McCormick, 'Rats, communications, and plague'; McCormick, 'Tracking mass death (I)'; Sarris, 'The Justinianic Plague.'

84 Harper, *The Fate of Rome*.

85 Horden, 'Mediterranean plague'.

86 Durliat, 'La peste du VI^e siècle'.

87 M. Whittow, *The Making of Byzantium, 600–1025* (Berkeley 1996), 66–68; C. Wickham, *Medieval Europe* (New Haven 2016), 43–4; Sarris, 'The Justinianic Plague.'

mortality claims and the socio-cultural effects of plague, but rarely, if ever, engages with the material its proponents have offered.

Cracks have, however, begun appearing at the seams of the plague narrative at the regional level. Clive Foss's detailed survey of Syrian cities found little evidence for major effects of the plague, arguing that the plague 'was not such a widespread disaster as it has been portrayed and that it was not the agent of fundamental change.'⁸⁸ Bachrach meanwhile argued that in Gaul the plague did not have a significant long-term demographic effect either.⁸⁹

Most recently, we have laid out a substantial critique of the maximalist interpretation, which has, for the first time, engaged with its proponents across all the disciplinary evidence. We argue that the evidence of the plague's mortality is tenuous and does not indicate massive demographic collapse and the end of antiquity. Instead, its effects remained limited beyond the local and short-term.⁹⁰

Recent developments

Due to the trends of the last twenty years, the Justinianic Plague is firmly entrenched in scholarly and public conversations as an explanation for the transformation from the ancient to the medieval world. Three recent avenues of scholarship could be incorporated into future research.

1. Earlier plague pandemics?

Scholars generally believe that the first outbreak of the Justinianic Plague was more lethal than subsequent outbreaks because it was unexpected and unknown. Mid-sixth-century people had no previous cultural or immunological experience with *Y. pestis*. Nevertheless, other historians have argued persuasively that plague had persisted in the southeastern Mediterranean region earlier, as the evidence of Rufus of Ephesus suggests.⁹¹ At the same time, evolutionary biologists have demonstrated clearly that *Y. pestis* was widely dispersed in western Eurasia more than a thousand years before the onset of the Justinianic Plague. If true, this could mean that plague was endemic or enzootic in the western Eurasian world.

Lars Walløe has argued that another ancient plague pandemic caused the end of the Mycenaean world and severe disruptions across the eastern Mediterranean from c. 1200–900 BCE. Scholars have proposed many different explanations for the collapse of the

88 C. Foss, 'Syria in transition, A. D. 550–750: An archaeological approach', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 51 (1997) 260.

89 Bachrach, 'Plague, population, and economy.' This is not an uncommon position: J-P. Devroey, *Économie rurale et société dans l'Europe franque: VIe - IXe siècles. T. 1: Fondements matériels, échanges et lien social* (Paris 2003); Devroey, 'Catastrophe, Crise et Changement Social', 146, 148–9.

90 L. Mordechai and M. Eisenberg, 'Rejecting catastrophe: The case of the Justinianic Plague', *Past & Present* 244 (2019) 3–50.

91 See a brief discussion in Sallares, 'Ecology, evolution, and epidemiology of plague', 251.

Mycenaean world, and Walløe supplemented the existing list with plague based on an epidemic mentioned in the Old Testament (1 Samuel 5 and 6), re-imagining the Mycenaean collapse as being a parallel version of the first and second pandemics.⁹²

Evidence for prehistoric plague cases have likewise been found in ancient DNA. Simon Rasmussen and his team asserted that *Yersinia pestis* was endemic across Eurasia after finding remains with plague DNA from 5,000 years ago. However, they noted that this Bronze Age *Y. pestis* was not capable of causing the bubonic type of plague, which was a later genetic development.⁹³ Recent research by Maria Spyrou's team revised these conclusions and asserted that bubonic-plague-causing strains had appeared, at least in some regions, as early as c. 4,000 years ago.⁹⁴

The gap between these Bronze Age finds and the Justinianic Plague was recently bridged in another aDNA article, which surveyed 137 ancient human genomes from the Eurasian steppes. Of the two cases of plague they found, the authors dated one set from the Tian Shan mountains in Central Asia to c. 200 CE. Although relatively far spatially, this brings the pre-Justinianic Plague DNA finds well into temporal proximity with the earliest known literary evidence for plague in Rufus of Ephesus. The exact connection between this find and the Justinianic Plague remains unknown, and future research is likely to further illuminate the pre-Justinianic Plague disease environment.

2. Plague-driven cultural change

Scholars have proposed a variety of connections between the plague and cultural change in late antiquity. Many of the transformations, which can be dated to the mid-sixth century, correlate chronologically with the first outbreaks of the plague. Mischa Meier's research has focused on the transformations of Justinian's reign, which can be divided between early and late phases, with the plague squarely in between. Meier has argued that the plague contributed to cultural changes such as greater liturgification, the sacralization of the emperor, the increased worship of the Virgin Mary, and the emergence of iconolatry.⁹⁵ He concluded that plague facilitated the solidification of these changes during the mid-sixth century.

92 L. Walløe, 'Was the disruption of the Mycenaean world caused by repeated epidemics of Bubonic Plague?', *Opuscula Atheniensia* 24 (1999) 121–6; C. Cunha and B. Cunha, 'Impact of plague on human history', *Infectious Disease Clinics of North America* 20, no. 2 (2006) 253, agree that the biblical epidemic (which they date to 1320 BCE) was plague. The biblical connection dates back to the nineteenth century, see W. McNeill, *Plagues and Peoples* (Garden City, NY 1976), 112–13.

93 S. Rasmussen et al., 'Early divergent strains of *Yersinia Pestis* in Eurasia 5,000 years ago', *Cell* 163, no. 3 (2015) 571–82. A. A. Valtueña et al., 'The Stone Age plague and its persistence in Eurasia', *Current Biology* 27.23 (2017) 3683–3691.e8, followed up with more research into early plague cases (naming it the Stone Age plague).

94 M. Spyrou et al., 'Analysis of 3800-year-old *Yersinia Pestis* genomes suggests a Bronze Age origin for Bubonic Plague', *Nature Communications* 9.1 (2018) 2234.

95 M. Meier, *Das andere Zeitalter Justinians: Kontingenzerfahrung und Kontingenzbewältigung im 6. Jahrhundert n. Chr* (Göttingen 2003); then summarized in Meier, 'The "Justinianic Plague"'; also see the case studies on various sources in M. Meier, 'Von Prokop zu Gregor von Tours: Kultur- und

Similarly, some scholars have cast the plague as being key to religious changes in Western Europe. Karl Ubl has linked increased legislation against incest to the plague, asserting that bishops at the Council of Tours (567 CE) had to ensure proper sexual behaviour to assuage divine wrath.⁹⁶ Nonetheless, such plague-based explanations are less common in the West, since the various post-Roman barbarian kingdoms had already begun to diverge from their late Roman predecessors by the mid-fifth century, before plague set in. If anything, the post-plague west witnessed an increase in Christian diversity, rather than a solidification of specific norms such as liturgification.⁹⁷ Moreover, even late antique eastern scholars have argued for the long-term transformation of various religious and cultural aspects, which cannot be clearly dated to the plague.⁹⁸ The initial outbreak of the plague might have catalyzed pre-existing changes, but Justinian himself, both before and after the early 540s, had already begun to transform the empire he inherited. Subsequent research might further illuminate the connection, or lack thereof, between plague and socio-cultural change in different regions of the late antique world.

3. *Online discussions and resources*

The internet has facilitated plague research through faster communication and by making key resources more accessible. Various online databases, forums, and lists on the plague and broader medical history have proliferated over the past few decades. The most active resource is MEDMED, a mailing list organized by Monica Green which connects over 800 subscribers to information about medicine in the medieval period.⁹⁹ While the mailing list's interests are broad, plague appears frequently in notifications and commentaries on newly published studies alongside discussions of plague related questions.

A related online resource, Michelle Ziegler's Contagions blog, similarly reports on new plague articles and relevant information.¹⁰⁰ Her website also contains links to a series of introductory articles that offer background to the plague's epidemiology, spread, and mortality. The Black Death Network, organized by a number of

mentalitätengeschichtlich relevante Folgen der "Pest" im 6. Jahrhundert', in F. Steger and K. P. Jankrift, *Gesundheit - Krankheit: Kulturtransfer medizinischen Wissens von der Spätantike bis in die Frühe Neuzeit* (Köln 2004), 19–40; and M. Meier, 'Natural disasters in the chronographia of John Malalas: Reflections on their function - an initial sketch', *Medieval History Journal* 10.1–2 (2007) 237–66; or M. Meier, 'Prokop, Agathias, Die Pest und Das, Ende' der Antiken Historiographie', *Historische Zeitschrift* 278, no. 1 (2014) 281–310.

96 K. Ubl, *Inzestverbot und Gesetzgebung: die Konstruktion eines Verbrechens (300–1100)* (Berlin 2008) 163.

97 See, for example, P. Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom: Triumph and Diversity, A.D. 200–1000*, 10th anniversary rev. edn (Chichester 2013).

98 On Mary, see for example, S. Shoemaker, *Mary in Early Christian Faith and Devotion* (New Haven 2016).

99 <https://lists.asu.edu/cgi-bin/wa?A0=MEDMED-L>.

100 <https://contagions.wordpress.com>.

academics, likewise posts significant new information on the plague, although generally focused on the Black Death with some comparative perspectives included.¹⁰¹

A key reference work for some of the plague datasets is Harvard's Digital Atlas of Roman and Medieval Civilizations (DARMC) database.¹⁰² DARMC is run by Michael McCormick, and consists of a series of datasets, including several relevant to the Justinianic Plague. The 'Summary Geodatabase of Epidemics, 312–749 AD' dataset, for example, contains Stathakopoulos' record of epidemics across the Mediterranean alongside other outbreaks of disease with geolocations and limited commentary.¹⁰³ Other datasets that may be of interest to the study of the Justinianic Plague include 'Rats 1–1500 [AD] to Archaeology of Rats 1–1500' and 'Roman Climate Historical Evidence'.

Finally, the internet also serves as a repository for video resources for plague-related presentations. This is particularly useful for non-specialist audiences as the talks are both easier to follow than the technical scientific articles and emphasize their main findings. There is no central repository for these lectures, but they can be accessed through academic institutions. For instance, an entire session entitled 'Plague in Diachronic and Interdisciplinary Perspective', was held at the European Association of Archaeologists in Vilnius, Lithuania in September 2016, and is now online and accessible through the website of the European Association of Archaeologists.¹⁰⁴ Another set of interdisciplinary lectures can be found at the website of the Max Planck-Harvard Research Center for the Archaeoscience of the Ancient Mediterranean (MHAAM).¹⁰⁵ Many of these lectures can also be found on YouTube. All of these resources make premodern plague more accessible to scholars and enhance both the speed and the scope of the discussion, facilitating further research.

Concluding remarks

This article has attempted to aggregate the most important developments in the study of the Justinianic Plague over the past two decades. As we have shown, a large number of scholars in diverse disciplines have tackled the plague as an inherently interdisciplinary field of study. As a result, the geographical and chronological scopes of the plague have been expanded substantially, reference works in the form of catalogues of plague occurrences have been published, and scientific studies have revealed novel insights.

101 <https://bldeathnet.hypotheses.org/>.

102 <https://darmc.harvard.edu>.

103 Note that the dataset names can be slightly different to those in the digital application.

104 https://www.e-a-a.org/Conferences/Filmed_EAA_Conference_Sessions/Vilnius_2016/Plague/EAA/Navigation_conferences/2016_videos/Plague.aspx.

105 <https://sohp.fas.harvard.edu/inaugural-lectures-max-planck-harvard-research-center-archaeoscience-ancient-mediterranean-mhaam>. See also the series of lectures on plague in Harvard's Initiative for the Science of the Human Past (webpage: <https://sohp.fas.harvard.edu/video-presentations>).

From a broader perspective, the trend in most recent scholarship is a movement away from moderate outcomes for the plague's impact, such as significant population loss, but with mixed long-term results, toward maximalist paradigms that envisage a demographic decline that persisted for centuries. Cautious views that equivocated on the plague's effects have been replaced by studies that collect all available evidence to argue for extreme outcomes. While Stathakopoulos himself has always remained cautious of exaggerating the plague's demographic impact, his accessible dataset has facilitated maximalist interpretations of the plague.¹⁰⁶

It is interesting to note that most historians of the Justinianic Plague tend to work on plague for a few years before moving on to different topics; few are plague specialists. Only Dionysios Stathakopoulos and Michael McCormick have continuously published on the Justinianic Plague. This might be explained by the dearth of potential sources, which may cause scholars to feel that they have exhausted the available material. Similarly, few historians have collaborated with others in studying the Justinianic Plague. This limits the extent to which historians are exposed to new material and methodologies, and deepens the rift between scientific and humanistic work on the topic. Finally, most historians of the Justinianic Plague work only on it and do not expand to other plague pandemics (e.g. the Black Death), non-plague epidemics, or other natural disasters. This phenomenon has contributed to the insularity of the Justinianic Plague as a field of studies and limits the engagement of its scholars with relevant research from neighboring fields and disciplines.

Moving forward, plague studies will likely continue to accelerate as scientific research continues to progress, aDNA testing becomes more common, and more positive plague remains come to light. Moreover, continued archaeological excavations could provide new evidence for continuity or change during the emergence of the plague in late antiquity, which could potentially illuminate aspects of the yet-intractable demographic questions, especially at a regional level. There is much for all of us to learn from each other.

106 Stathakopoulos, *Famine and Pestilence*; Stathakopoulos, 'The Justinianic Plague revisited', remains cautious although he would move towards the maximalist interpretation over the next few years; for example, Stathakopoulos, 'Invisible protagonists'.

which flared up during the first half of the twentieth century often descended into generic xenophobia which affected Greeks and engendered ambivalence and even hostility towards Egyptian nationalism. Many Greek Egyptians had come to the country to escape poverty, persecution and nationalist conflict. The fear of being targeted, losing everything and having to start over again from scratch would have been at the back of their minds when they took the decision to join the exodus.

One last point. A testimonial on the back cover of Dalachanis' book describes it as "an excellent, richly documented study of the final phase of the history of the Greeks in Egypt." I fully agree with the accolades, but the final phase of Greek Egyptian history begins after the exodus of the 1950s and 1960s. Active community life survived in Alexandria and especially Cairo well into the 1980s and even today churches, schools and philanthropic institutions continue to function in both cities.

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Theodora D. Patrona, *Return Narratives: Ethnic Space in Late-Twentieth-Century Greek American and Italian American Literature*. Madison: Farleigh Dickinson University Press/Rowman & Littlefield, 2017. Pp. xxxi, 173.
DOI:[10.1017/byz.2019.7](https://doi.org/10.1017/byz.2019.7)

Six novels, written in English by Italian Americans and Greek Americans over the past forty years, are examined in pairs in the three main sections of this book, 'the first comparative study of return works of the two literatures' (xiii). While Italian American Studies (and surveys of this type of literature) are well advanced, Greek American Studies has 'made slow but steady progress compared with the Italian American gallop' (155). The novels deal with attempts by female and male protagonists 'usually speaking for the authors themselves' (xix) to achieve a sense of self which acknowledges the contribution of their ethnic heritage to that self-definition. In these attempts, actual or metaphorical journeys of return are undertaken, and myth, folklore and story-telling play a key role. Changing perceptions of 'ethnic space' over the forty years spanned by these novels are highlighted. By 'ethnic space' is meant 'the spatial, geographical, and socio-cultural entity of the home country', that is, the place from which the protagonists' forebears emigrated, or which they themselves left.

It is important to note that the focus of the book is not so much on the novels themselves, but on the light they throw, comparatively, on the immigrant search for identity, in the light of ethnicity, gender, and the socio-historical contexts in which the immigrants live—economic and political aspects being crucial factors. Changes in their own perspectives on their identity are charted, from rejection (often in response to previous migrants' stereotypes of their origins), to 'mystification' (xiv) of their ethnic heritage. The analysis employs theories of 'literary and cultural criticism ranging from psychoanalysis to feminist theory, and postmodernist theories' (xiii).

Other novels, discussed in the Introduction, provide context, as do sociological and historical studies of the immigrant experience. Although anthropological approaches are mentioned (xxi), in-depth studies of the areas from which Italians and Greeks migrated are not referred to, nor is a relevant discussion of 'the position of [Greek] women: appearance and reality' (Ernestine Friedl, *Anthropological Quarterly* 1967). Another possibly helpful source might have been Theodore Saloutos's *They Remember America* (1956), a study of repatriated Greek Americans; however, his book on the Greeks of the USA (1964) is mentioned.

Also relevant to Patrona's discussion is Margaret Mead's book on the America character (original title *And Keep Your Powder Dry*, 1942). Mead states that 'in our behaviour, however many generations ... in this country... we are all third generation, our European ancestry tucked away and half forgotten'. She argues that, as all Americans are immigrants, their families will have gone through the stages of leaving a 'home country' (first generation, who find that they have to be taught about their new land by their own children, attending local schools), of over-emphasising their assimilation to American values and ways of behaviour, rejecting their immigrant parents' ways, even intolerant of 'foreign-ness' (second generation), and feeling that they have established membership, but maybe only just (third generation), and have to move 'onward and upwards'.

The first pair of novels are by women and were published in the 1970s: *Cora* by Daphne Athas (1978) and *Umbertina* by Helen Barolini (1979). Both have the struggles of American feminism in the 1960s and 1970s as aspects of their context. The first part of *Cora* is written in the third person, about Don, a young American of Greek origin (Antonis), and about his relationship with the middle-aged Cora. Cora joins Don (whose character suggests aspects of Adonis) in his search for 'the goddess', and Cora feels that this might be part of her search for herself. They travel in Greece during the Colonels' regime (1967–1974). The second part of the novel is written in the first person, as by Cora, and describes her 'initiation into spirituality' (26), as, like Persephone, she is first taken into an underworld and then returns from it, transformed. Unfamiliar with this novel, my own reaction to Patrona's summary and discussion of the narrative was one of distaste that the (relatively mild) incarceration of Cora (in a ruined fort in the Peloponnese) in 1971 (while her young lover is tortured), becomes the vehicle for her self-discovery. She experiences 'tremendous changes', Don only 'minor ones' (15), despite the brutality he has suffered in the torture chamber.

In the second novel of this pair, tracing the stories of four generations of Italian American women, and their reactions to return to their region of origin (on honeymoon, on holiday), the narrative is by no means chronologically straightforward (as Patrona's page references to the novel might suggest). The psychoanalytic sessions of Umbertina's grand-daughter, Marguerite, recounting her feelings about her mother and grand-mother, come early on and are used to place the reader in the context of the family story. Patrona remarks that Marguerite has to rely on her (male) psychoanalyst to help her, stating 'Like another Persephone, a man has to salvage [save?] her from

her imprisonment in this Shadowy Underworld' (43). Ignoring the grammatical error that it is not a man, but Marguerite who is 'like Persephone', one wonders if Patrona realises that it was Demeter who secured the (partial) release of her daughter from the Underworld (although only after begging Zeus to intervene). Maybe the confusion is with Alcestis and Hercules? Or is the confusion Barolini's? In which case, Patrona does not point it out. However, Marguerite is unable to 'transform' herself, and it is not until the generation of her daughter, Tina, that this is achieved, in a slow process, through study, after a visit to the home country.

A significant symbol of the strength of women of this Italian American family is a rosemary root, brought from Calabria by Umbertina, the immigrant. At the end of the novel this is replicated by the same plant being placed in the earth at Cape Cod by Marguerite's daughter, Umbertina's great-grandchild and namesake, Tina (standing for Barolini herself). Although the symbolism of the planting is recognised, the link between rosemary and 'remembrance' is not stressed as much as is its signalling of a successfully transplanted and integrated ethnic identity.

The second pair of novels, also by women, come from the 1990s: *The Priest Fainted*, a first person narrative by an unnamed protagonist, by Catherine Temma Davidson (1998) and *No Pictures in My Grave*, also a first person narrative, of her own experiences, by Susan Caperna Lloyd (1992). In both these novels, cooking ('ethnic cuisine') features (although there is no reference to David Sutton's work on food and memory). The dish *imam baildi* ('the imam fainted' - some say because of the amount of olive oil used in the dish) provides the title for Davidson's book, while Lloyd's title comes from the custom of placing photos of living family members in the coffin of the deceased, who is believed to protect them.

Lloyd does not go to her father's hometown but to Sicily, where, on a second, solo, visit without her husband and family, she feels that the church of the Black Madonna at Tindari, built on the site of a temple originally dedicated to Cybele, will be the mythological source of empowerment for her. Taking a local, liberated woman as her model, she eventually takes part in a procession where the religious items are usually carried by men. Patrona notes that Lloyd is happy to take advantage of her American identity when it suits her, and to choose which aspects of her identity are of best benefit in various situations (for example, not cooking in the kitchen with other women but sitting at the table with the men to be served).

Of all the novels discussed, this pair is most strongly critiqued by Patrona for the authors' 'celebratory, self-gratifying, and pacifying' tone and approach (148). Also, in all these four novels, these return visits, as Patrona points out, are made financially possible by the immigrant generations' success in America, and also fuelled by the 'massive marketing of the home country experience' as a way to search for identity and achieve self-fulfilment (93), in response to postmodernist anxieties.

It is perhaps obvious that in women's searches for a sense of their own identities, drawing parallels and tracing patterns of similarity and difference with their female

forebears, the myth of Demeter and Persephone, and the Great Goddess Cybele, should be major reference points. In contrast, the final pair of novels, one from the 1970s, the other from the 1990s, are by male authors: *When the Tree Sings* by Stathis Haviaras (1978) and *In the Garden of Papa Santuzzu* by Tony Ardizzzone (1999). Haviaras left Greece in 1967 at the age of 32, at the beginning of the Colonels' regime, so cannot really be fitted into the typology of later-generation immigrant writers; Ardizzzone is 'of Sicilian ancestry'. In both these novels, it is story-telling of an almost magical realist kind which is the mode through which the authors reach an understanding of their ethnic identities. Haviaras does not name the country in which his novel is located (but it is clearly Greece). The protagonist-narrator is introduced as a boy, traumatised by the atrocities of the Occupation and the Civil War, being brought up by his grandparents. He grows older as a series of episodic scenes unfold, as he reports tales told by a shadow-puppeteer, and by an old musician (characters who represent aspects of ethnic heritage). Many of the tales, and the remarks of the two men, have aspects of social and political critique, but the boy (and the reader) is left to work out the significance for himself/ herself of the messages in these tales.

Ardizzzone's book consists of twelve tales, told by different first-person narrators, some of whom appear as actors in other tales. Magical tales set in the homeland shuttle back and forth with stories about the tough life of the migrant. It is worth noting that, like Haviaras, he uses story-telling and the worlds of magical folk beliefs in spirits and strange forces and does not have recourse to mythology as do the female authors. In one sense, his narrators are in the position that Haviaras found himself in when he fled to America, that is, a first-generation migrant.

In the Acknowledgements, Patrona expresses her thanks to Barolini, Athas, Ardizzzone and Haviaras for their involvement in her project. She does not mention whether she contacted Davidson and Lloyd, but, given the critical tone of her comments on their books, it would not be surprising if she did not, or if they decided not to become involved once they knew the direction of her thoughts on their work.

Finishing this book, I was reminded of a remark about reading Proust's "Remembrance of Things Past", that the reader should now begin all over again, reading the book with the knowledge of all it contains, reading it as the author wrote it, knowing the end when embarking on the beginning. Similarly, Patrona already knows the texts she is going to discuss in later chapters, but the reader may not. One needs to read the book again to understand, for example, the significance of the first two novels discussed in the context of later ones, to understand how the historical periods in which each was written inform and colour the style and narrative, and how the development of literary theory, of feminism, of post-modernism, also shapes Patrona's approach.

A few final points: while, consistent with current usage, the words 'Italian American' and 'Greek American' are not hyphenated (although some of the older authors cited do so) the title contains an ugly doubly hyphenated adjective, 'late-twentieth-century'.

In one place the Greek adjective *'porphyro'* in a title by Haviaras, is translated 'purple' (102, and in the bibliography), and in another as 'scarlet' (149, note 13). The title of Voulgaris's *Psichi Vathia* is not translated at all (118, note 5), and the name chosen by a woman 'mountain fighter', Andromache, is said to be 'after the wise and modest Homeric heroine' (113) but without giving the derivation of the name, from the Greek for 'man' and 'battle', which is surely highly significant? Odd word choices, even mis-spellings, and odd sentence structure, also impede the reader's enjoyment of the book: 'ex-patriots' for 'ex-patriates' (6). Nicholas Gage's book *Eleni* is described as unravelling 'his mother's story of execution in the civil war' (xxx), surely 'the story of his mother's execution' is meant? Athas's themes are described as 'reinstating her allegiance among other writers of the 1970s' (5), perhaps 'allegiance to'? or 'reinstating her place'? The protagonist of Davidson's novel is said to have been 'misguided from her personal identity quest' (98, note 16), perhaps 'mis-directed'? One female protagonist is described as feeling 'incorporated in the long concatenation of female figures' (88), maybe 'series' is meant? For 'fermentations' (104), perhaps 'ferment'? 'For 'indulge to' (128) maybe just 'indulge'; for 'in the face of' (129) something like 'in the person of' could be substituted.

The [Greek, although the country in which the tale is set is not named] puppet theatre is said to have 'mocked and cauterized contemporary Greek reality' (109): maybe 'castigated' is meant? Elsewhere 'indigenous moral' (112) must surely be 'morale'? In several places 'disinterest' is used instead of 'lack of interest' or 'uninterest' (39), similarly 'subsequent disinterestedness in socialist...issues' (145-6). Huyssen is said to advance an 'argumentation' of the contemporary novel (117), maybe 'critique'?

The final sentence of the book expresses hope that it may inspire others to find 'their own niche in the bosoms of ethnic space' (155). It should certainly encourage readers to read the novels discussed, and to consider seriously Patrona's attempt to compare them.

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Two rhetorical exercises on Ganymede in John Doxapatres' *Homiliae in Aphthonium**

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A pair of anonymous rhetorical exercises in Greek, dating perhaps to the eleventh century, contain a refutation and a confirmation of the myth of Ganymede, in which the young Trojan shepherd is abducted by Zeus in the form of an eagle to live with him in heaven. This article analyses the opposing arguments about divinity and sexuality in the two exercises, argues that they contain a unique aetiological account of the violet, and situates them in the reception history of Ganymede.

Keywords: rhetorical education; progymnasmata; mythology; homosexuality; pederasty

Aphthonius' *Progymnasmata* was the most influential manual on prose composition in Greek from late antiquity.¹ This fifth-century manual served as an authoritative guide for teachers and writers of progymnasmata through the Byzantine period and beyond. In the second half of the eleventh century, John Doxapatres wrote an extensive commentary on it.² He drew on earlier commentaries, and he also incorporated nine model exercises from an anonymous collection of uncertain date. Hock and O'Neil and I have argued elsewhere that this collection was not written by Doxapatres

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1 Aphthonius, *Corpus Rhetoricum*, ed. M. Patillon (Paris 2008) 112–62; translation in G. A. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric* (Atlanta 2003) 89–127.

2 John Doxapatres, *Rhetores Graeci*, ed. C. Walz, II (Stuttgart 1835) 69–564. On Doxapatres' pedagogical approach, see R. F. Hock, 'Observing a teacher of *progymnasmata*', in M. R. Hauge and A. W. Pitts (eds.), *Ancient Education and Early Christianity* (London 2016) 39–70. For Byzantine education more generally, see the useful overview of A. Markopoulos, 'Education', in E. Jeffreys, J. Haldon, and R. Cormack (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies* (Oxford 2008) 785–95.

himself, although it dates to the same half-century.³ However, if the nine exercises did not originate from a single collection, the two exercises in refutation and confirmation that are discussed in this article could date from as early as the fifth century. They cannot be earlier, however, since their method and style is influenced by Aphthonius. Regardless of when they were composed, this pair of rhetorical exercises are the most substantial example of the post-classical Greek reception of the myth of Ganymede. This scant tradition presents a stark contrast to the rich and creative reception of the Ganymede myth in the literature and visual arts of western Europe.

After students in late antiquity learned to read and write and had studied poetry, they went on to study oratory and historiography, and eventually began to compose their own prose exercises (*progymnasmata*), which developed writing skills that were useful in and of themselves, but which ultimately aimed at turning the students into proficient composers and speakers of declamations (*meletai*).⁴ Myth played a large role in this course of instruction. One of the elementary exercises, called narration (*diegema*), asked students to take a familiar myth (usually one involving love, metamorphosis, or both) and present it in a brief, concise, and elegant way. Later, students took such mythical narratives and broke them down into their constituent claims in order to refute and confirm them. Refutation (*anaskeue*) came first, and was thought to be easier than confirmation (*kataskeue*). In a refutation, each individual claim of the narration could be criticized for being unclear, incredible, impossible, illogical, inappropriate, and/or inexpedient. Aphthonius' manual used the myth of Daphne's pursuit by Apollo and her transformation into a laurel tree as a model.⁵ In his refutation, Aphthonius raises several difficult objections to the story: How could Daphne's alleged parents (a river god and Earth) have conceived her? Which parent raised her, and where? Why was the god Apollo subject to human passions? Why was a male deity unable to outrun a female mortal? And why did her mother receive her daughter and prevent her marriage to a god? Students then took the same myth and subjected it to confirmation, using the opposite topics: now the individual claims were defended as being clear, credible, possible, logical, appropriate, and/or expedient. In his confirmation of the Daphne myth,⁶ Aphthonius argues that: Daphne's birth from Earth and a river god makes sense because earth and water are the source of all things; Daphne's beauty was a gift from the gods, and she was therefore loved by a god; the god's pursuit was a virtuous one; and it was only natural that Mother Earth would

3 R. F. Hock and E. N. O'Neil, *The Chreia and Ancient Rhetoric: Classroom Exercises* (Atlanta 2002) 244–57; C. A. Gibson, 'The anonymous progymnasmata in John Doxapatres' *Homiliae in Aphthonium*', *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 102 (2009) 83–94.

4 For an overview of this educational system, see R. J. Penella, 'The progymnasmata in imperial Greek education', *Classical World* 105 (2011) 77–90.

5 Aphthonius, *Corpus Rhetoricum*, 120–4; Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 101–3.

6 Aphthonius, *Corpus Rhetoricum*, 124–6; Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 103–5.

welcome her returning child. Confirmation, as we can see in this well-known example, often had to resort to allegory to shore up the weaker case.⁷

The refutation and confirmation of the story of Ganymede in John Doxapatres' *Homiliae in Aphthonium* follow Aphthonius' instructions and are typical Byzantine examples of the exercise.⁸ The brief narrative exposition of the myth found in the refutation runs as follows:

Ganymede...was a very beautiful Trojan youth. Zeus fell in love with him and, wishing to live with his beloved and supposing that he did not deserve to spend his life on earth, contrived the following, so that his beloved might spend his life with him in heaven. Taking the form of an eagle and coming to the mountains where the youth was herding sheep, he snatched him with his talons and bore him up into the air. Struck with fear, the youth dropped some sweat on the earth from above, and the earth received it and sent up a flower called the violet.⁹

Students of Greek mythology will notice two missing details from this account: there is no mention of Ganymede's role as cupbearer to Zeus (on which, more later) and his replacement of the goddess Hebe in that role, nor do we find the divine horses or golden vine given to the boy's parents to compensate them for their loss.¹⁰ However, more striking is the addition of a detail: that the sweat that Ganymede released in his terror was absorbed into the earth and produced a violet (*ion*).¹¹

In the refutation exercise, the author argues that Ganymede's intelligence, as suggested by the derivation of his name from 'rejoicing in deliberations' (τοῖς βουλευμασι χαίρειν),¹² is inconsistent with his Trojan (barbarian) origin and with his physical beauty. Zeus, who is non-physical and divine, would not suffer from desire for (in decreasing order of

7 On ancient and Byzantine exercises in refutation and confirmation, see C. A. Gibson, 'True or false? Greek myth and mythography in the progymnasmatia', in S. M. Trzaskoma and R. S. Smith (eds.), *Writing Myth: Mythography in the Ancient World* (Leuven 2013) 289–308.

8 Doxapatres, *Rhetores Graeci*, II, 349–53, 366–9.

9 Doxapatres, *Rhetores Graeci*, II, 350 (Refutation sect. 2).

10 For brief overviews of the ancient myths of Ganymede, see E. Visser, 'Ganymede (1)', in H. Cancik and H. Schneider (eds.), *Brill's New Pauly* (Leiden 2006). Consulted online on 27 January 2018 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1574-9347_bnp_e418930>; B. Solch, 'Ganymede', in M. Moog-Grünwald (ed.), *Brill's New Pauly Supplements I – Volume 4: The Reception of Myth and Mythology* (Leiden 2011) Sections A-B2. Consulted online on 27 January 2018 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2214-8647_bnps4_e418930>. See also J. Davidson, *The Greeks and Greek Love: A Bold New Exploration of the Ancient World* (New York 2007) 209–46; L. Barkan, *Transuming Passion: Ganymede and the Erotics of Humanism* (Stanford 1991) 27–40.

11 The ἴον 'is one of the most frequently mentioned flowers in Greek literature and is the name given to three quite different plants' that are distinguished by their colours. No further information is given about the flower in the exercises, and so we cannot tell which plant is meant. See M. E. Irwin, 'Evadne, Iamos and violets in Pindar's "Sixth Olympian"', *Hermes* 124 (1996) 392, with discussion on 392–5; A. Giesecke, *The Mythology of Plants: Botanical Lore from Ancient Greece and Rome* (Los Angeles 2014) 131.

12 This is a unique translation of the supposed etymology from the Homeric γανυέσθαι + μήδεα ('to rejoice in counsels'), which is first mentioned in Xenophon, *Symposium* 8.30, where Socrates explains that Zeus fell in love with Ganymede's soul, not his body.

likelihood) a god, a human, or a male. If he did so suffer, he would conceal the relationship on earth rather than conducting it in heaven in front of the other gods. In any event, mortals cannot live in heaven. If Zeus had abducted Ganymede, he would not have transformed himself into an unreasoning animal and one that would frighten the boy. Eagles cannot lift humans into the air. Plants grow from seeds, not from sweat.

In the confirmation exercise, the author argues that Ganymede was a handsome Trojan youth, just like Paris/Alexander. Zeus fell in love with his prudence (the highest spiritual virtue) and his beauty (the highest physical virtue), and desired to dwell more closely with him. As king of the gods, he rightly transformed himself into the king of the birds in order to take the boy from earth to heaven, and he did so easily. The frightened boy naturally dripped with sweat, and the moisture from it combined with the dry earth to produce a violet.¹³

No other example of a narration, refutation, or confirmation exercise on Ganymede is extant, nor is the theme attested in other ancient or Byzantine Greek handbooks or commentaries. In addition, the narration's aetiological account of the violet is not found elsewhere.¹⁴ There is no ancient literary account that depicts Ganymede as sweating during the abduction, or any myth that associates his or anyone else's sweat with the origin of violets or any other flower. Nor is his sweat portrayed here as an attractive, erotic quality;¹⁵ it is generated by terror, not by physical gratification. The confirmation describes Ganymede as 'struck with fear', 'very timid', 'full of fear at the enormity of the act', and 'dripping all over with sweat in his agony', and even offers a general rule: 'For fear is accustomed to produce agony in the limbs, and the sweat is proof of this'.¹⁶ There are, however, mythical associations of Ganymede with other liquids. Ganymede pours nectar for the gods in heaven, and Zeus made him part of the constellation Aquarius (Greek Hydrophoros), the water-bearer, after his death.¹⁷ However, in this narration, Ganymede does not serve drinks to Zeus, carry a water jar, or live on forever in a constellation.

Moreover, no other myth of Ganymede or of any abductee uses the abduction to explain the origin of the violet or of any other flower.¹⁸ The extant myths for the

13 Translations of both exercises may be found in the appendix to this article.

14 The author does not state explicitly that this was the first violet, but other Byzantine refutation and confirmation exercises focus on the famous first instance: the narcissus in Ps.-Nicolaus, *Rhetores Graeci*, ed. C. Walz, I (Stuttgart 1832) 294.10–295.33; the red rose in George Pachymeres, *Rhetores Graeci*, ed. C. Walz, I (Stuttgart 1832) 557.17–561.10; the plane tree in Maximus Planudes, *Rhetores Graeci*, ed. C. Walz, I (Stuttgart 1832) 609.1–614.18.

15 As in, for example, the debate on the relative merits of loving boys and loving women in Achilles Tatius, *Leucippe and Clitophon* 2.38, where Menelaus asserts that the sweat of boys (produced in wrestling and sexual intercourse) smells better than the perfumes of women.

16 Doxapatres, *Rhetores Graeci*, II, 18–27 (Confirmation sect. 7).

17 Visser, 'Ganymede'.

18 On the violet in Greek myth and culture, see Giesecke, *The Mythology of Plants*, 131–2; A. B. Cook, 'Iostephanos', *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 20 (1900) 1–13.

origin of violets focus on Attis and three figures whose names suggested an etymological connection with the Greek word *ion*: Iamos, Ia, and Io. In his *Sixth Olympian Ode*, the fifth-century B.C. Greek poet Pindar describes Apollo's infant son Iamos lying on the ground, bathed in the yellow and purple light of violets that grew up spontaneously around him.¹⁹ In the early fourth century C.E., the Christian apologist Arnobius relates that when Attis castrated himself under a pine tree, Cybele gathered and buried the pieces, the violet grew from the blood, and from that time forward the pine tree was wreathed with violets. Attis' virgin bride-to-be, named Ia, then committed suicide, and her blood was transformed into purple violets.²⁰ In the late fourth century C.E., Severus of Alexandria, in his progymnasmata, narrates that when Zeus transformed his beloved Io into a cow, the earth honoured her by sending up violets for her to graze on.²¹

The unique aetiology of the violet in Doxapatres is all the more puzzling in light of the fact that other writers of refutation and confirmation exercises use the most familiar versions of myths and do not seek out rare variants or invent new details themselves. This is true of every other extant example of the exercise.²² In the absence of other evidence, I argue that the author simply invented this part of the story, and that he did so for two reasons: (1) it allowed him to demonstrate the use of physical allegory in the confirmation exercise, and (2) it allowed him in both exercises to discourage and distract from the image of Zeus and Ganymede as being united forever in heaven in a sexual relationship. Let us consider these two arguments in more detail.

The elements of the standard myth of Ganymede allowed the author to show how to use etymology, theological allegory, and moral allegory to confirm a myth.²³ Ganymede 'rejoices in deliberations' (etymology), Zeus behaves in certain ways for certain reasons (theological), and men should honor spiritual over physical qualities and avoid sexual immorality (moral). However, the standard myth did not give the author an opportunity to show how to use physical allegory, in which some aspect of the natural world helps to explain the myth. Recall that Aphthonius had used physical allegory to explain the birth of Daphne from water and earth in his model exercise. Similarly, a Byzantine confirmation exercise about Pasiphae responds to the objection that her father, the Sun god, could never have mated with a human female to produce Pasiphae by asserting that the sun is the source of all life and is thus the common father of us

19 Pindar, *Olympian* 6.53–6. See Irwin, 'Evadne, Iamos and violets', 385–95.

20 Arnobius, *Adversus Nationes* 5.7.2–3.

21 Severus, *Rhetores Graeci*, ed. C. Walz, I (Stuttgart 1832) 537; for a more recent edition with Italian translation and notes, see E. Amato and G. Ventrella (eds.), *I Progimnasmata di Severo di Alessandria (Severo di Antiochia?): Introduzione, traduzione e commento* (Berlin 2009) 53–4.

22 For a list, see Gibson, 'True or false?', 308.

23 On allegorical approaches to myth in the Byzantine period, see A. J. Goldwyn and D. Kokkini (eds.), *John Tzetzes: Allegories of the Iliad* (Cambridge, MA 2015) xii–xvi; P. Cesaretti, *Allegoristi di Omero a Bisanzio: ricerche ermeneutiche (XI–XII secolo)* (Milan 1991). For the ancient background, see D. A. Russell and D. Konstan, *Heracitus: Homeric Problems* (Atlanta 2005) xi–xxx.

all.²⁴ Since Ganymede has two human parents (unmentioned in these exercises), and since the confirmation exercise treats Zeus as an anthropomorphic god and not a force of nature, there was no place in the standard myth of Ganymede for the author to introduce physical allegory. If he wanted to illustrate the full array of allegorical approaches in a single model exercise, he may have decided to invent an aetiology for the violet, perhaps under the distant influence of two myths in which the death of a beloved produces blood which becomes a flower. Apollo makes the hyacinth arise from the blood of his beloved Hyacinthus, and Aphrodite creates the anemone from the blood of her beloved Adonis.²⁵ Ganymede's abduction, like the abduction of Persephone by Hades, could be seen as a figurative death from the perspective of those left behind, and an epigram in the *Greek Anthology* asks the eagle not to make Ganymede bleed (αἱμάξαι) with its talons.²⁶ Zeus, however, unlike Apollo and Aphrodite, had no reason to grieve and so to produce a flower as a memorial, and there is no origin myth connected with Ganymede's blood. Using the pattern of these other myths, however, the author may well have invented the origin of the violet for his myth of Zeus and Ganymede.

My second explanation for this invention concerns the relationship of Zeus and Ganymede. In the western tradition, as Leonard Barkan explains:

...the prevailing exegesis of the Ganymede myth, from Plato's time through the Renaissance, transforms the carnality of the myth as radically as possible. Indeed the exegesis often seeks to remove carnality from the story by interpreting the narrative in terms of sacred rapture and the love of God—with both the subjective and objective genitives intended but with the definition of love pointedly religious. Ganymede's flight to heaven, in other words, becomes the perfect type of transcendent divine love, contrasting sharply with such myths as those of Europa and Danaë, in which Jupiter came down to the earthly level of his inamorata rather than translating her aloft. What might be said to be the most illicitly carnal of all the divine amours is translated into the most positively sanctioned.²⁷

Our pair of Byzantine Greek exercises in Doxapatres takes a decidedly different approach. Both exercises acknowledge that Ganymede was physically beautiful and that Zeus was attracted to his beauty; the myth left no room to deny this. In addition, in this version of the myth, Ganymede does not become a cupbearer, so there is no alternative or competing motive for the abduction other than Zeus' desire for him. However, in both exercises, the author also attempts to circumvent the sexual implications: the refutation vehemently denies that Zeus and Ganymede engaged in

24 Ps.-Nicolaus, *Rhetores Graeci*, ed. C. Walz, I (Stuttgart 1832) 298, 307–8.

25 Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 10.205–16 and 728–39.

26 *Greek Anthology* 12.221.

27 Barkan, *Transuming Passion*, 24.

sexual intercourse, and the confirmation argues that Zeus was more interested in Ganymede's spiritual qualities. Because this relationship is the first divine-human pederastic relationship and Zeus' only homosexual relationship, the Christian pedagogue who composed this model exercise for his teenaged Christian students (and by extension John Doxapatres, who included the exercise in his commentary) could not fail to consider the sexuality implicit in even the most basic retelling of the story.

The refutation denies the sexual relationship in stages, each representing a fallback position in case the previous argument fails to persuade. First, it argues that Zeus, as an incorporeal being, is incapable of experiencing any bodily passion; otherwise he could not be a god.²⁸ Next, supposing that an incorporeal Zeus could fall in love, why would he fall in love with a human? And worse yet, with a male?²⁹ Our author argues:

But if even being a god he was enslaved by a love for human intercourse, it was not likely for him to fall in love with a male, but with a female, unless those who say this nonsense believe that divinities are not only subject to love (ἐρωτικόν) but also corrupters of boys (παιδοφθόρον), and in this respect more wretched than even wretched men. Who, then, hearing that the greatest of the gods makes such mistakes, would not be swept away into wickedness and plunged headlong into utmost absurdity?³⁰

Next, supposing that Zeus did have 'male-corrupting' (ἄρρενοφθόρον) inclinations, why would he have sexual intercourse with (συνεῖναι) and spend time with Ganymede openly in front of gods and humans?³¹ Supposing one grants all these reservations, the author's final objection to the relationship is that while it is hard for gods to live on earth, it would be impossible for Ganymede, being corporeal and mortal, to survive in heaven.³² Refutation, then, denies the carnality of the relationship by arguing on three fronts: Zeus is ultimately not a corrupter of boys or of males in general, the alleged relationship of Zeus and Ganymede is impossible, and it is morally inexpedient even to suggest the possibility.³³

28 Doxapatres, *Rhetores Graeci*, II, 350–1 (Refutation sect. 4).

29 Doxapatres, *Rhetores Graeci*, II, 351 (Refutation sect. 5).

30 Doxapatres, *Rhetores Graeci*, II, 351 (Refutation sect. 5). The pejorative word παιδοφθόρος ('corrupter of boys') replaced the positive or neutral word παιδευαστής ('lover of boys') in Christian discourse about pederasty. See K. Niederwimmer, *The Didache: A Commentary*, trans. L. M. Maloney (Minneapolis 1998) 89 n.7, with further references.

31 Doxapatres, *Rhetores Graeci*, II, 351 (Refutation sect. 6).

32 Doxapatres, *Rhetores Graeci*, II, 352 (Refutation sect. 7).

33 Beyond this pair of exercises, there is no sustained discussion of the homosexual/pederastic relationship of Zeus and Ganymede in Byzantine Greek literature, and there are no extant refutation or confirmation exercises on other divine-human homosexual couples from Greek mythology for comparison (e.g., Poseidon and Pelops, Dionysus and Adonis, Apollo and Admetus, Apollo and Cyparissus). General discussions of the Byzantine reception of the ancient Greek discourse on homoeroticism, and of homosexuality/pederasty in Byzantium, are lacking. Some important studies are K. Pitsakis, 'L'homoérotisme dans la culture byzantine: le cadre normatif et ses reflets littéraires', in P. Odorico and

The confirmation exercise, as usual, is framed as a response both to the individual claims of the narration and to the prior refutation exercise, and so the author does not have the option to start over with a clean slate and argue (for example) that this story is simply an allegory about the human soul's quest for union with the divine, or to offer a rationalizing account without gods.³⁴ Working under these restrictions, he first establishes that Trojan Ganymede was beautiful, just as boys and young men naturally are, and in particular his fellow Trojan Paris,³⁵ and then he moves on to consider the claim that Zeus fell in love with him. Zeus was attracted to Ganymede's wisdom and prudence (the highest of the spiritual virtues), and only coincidentally to his beauty (the highest of the physical virtues).³⁶ In this section, the author uses the word *ώραῖος*, which occurs in the narration and refers exclusively to physical beauty, to describe Ganymede, while implying that the word *καλός*, which does not occur in the narration and which often encompasses both physical and moral qualities, is a coterminous synonym. Zeus is 'a lover of beautiful things' (*τῶν καλῶν*) and wanted to seem to be 'beautiful' (*καλός*), and so he pursued a relationship with (*συνεῖναι*) Ganymede, who was *ώραῖος* but not explicitly said to be *καλός*.³⁷

In the confirmation exercise, physical beauty is inferior to spiritual beauty, Ganymede's possession of prudence and wisdom is the real attraction for Zeus, and Zeus hopes to increase his own reputation for goodness and wisdom by seeking out a human bearer of those qualities in order to 'be with' (*συνεῖναι*) him. In the refutation, the verb *συνεῖναι* means 'to have sexual intercourse with' and is condemned as a wicked practice. In sections 5–6, the author finds it hard to believe that Zeus was 'seized with a love for human intercourse (*ἀνθρωπίνης συνουσίας*)' with a male and that he proudly and openly pursued the relationship, when even heterosexual couplings are embarrassing and practiced in secret. Such a Zeus would not only be a corrupter of boys and males and 'more wretched than even wretched men', but would also morally imperil anyone who believed the story. In section 3 of the confirmation, by contrast,

N. Pasero (eds.), *Corrispondenza d'amorosi sensi: L'omoerotismo nella letteratura medievale* (Alessandria 2008) 1–29; K. Pitsakis, 'Η θέση των ομοφυλοφίλων στη βυζαντινή κοινωνία', in C. A. Maltezos (ed.), *Πρακτικά Ημερίδας. Οι περιθωριακοί στο Βυζάντιο* (Athens 1993), 171–269; S. Troianos, 'Kirchliche und weltliche Rechtsquellen zur Homosexualität in Byzanz', *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 39 (1989) 29–48; P. Koukoules, 'Τὰ οὐ Φωνητὰ τῶν Βυζαντινῶν', *Byzantinon Bios kai Politismos* 6 (1955) 505–39.

34 On rationalizing versions of the myth, in which Ganymede is abducted by the humans Tantalus or Minos, see Davidson 671 n. 41. These stories continue to be relayed in Byzantine times, in authors including John Malalas, the *Suda*, George Cedrenus, and Eustathius.

35 Doxapatres, *Rhetores Graeci*, II, 367 (Confirmation sect. 2). In the twelfth century, Eustathius, in his commentary on Homer's *Iliad*, also lists Anchises, Boukolion, Deiphobos, Priam (even as an old man), and Hector (even as a dead man) as the most handsome men of Troy: Eustathius, *Commentarii ad Homeri Iliadem pertinentes*, ed. M. van der Valk, III (Leyden 1979) 135.

36 Doxapatres, *Rhetores Graeci*, II, 367 (Confirmation sect. 3).

37 On conceptions of male beauty in the period, see M. Hatzaki, *Beauty and the Male Body in Byzantium: Perceptions and Representations in Art and Text* (New York 2009).

the same verb συνεῖναι denotes an intimacy that is not overtly sexual, born of a yearning for union predominantly with spiritual qualities. Such intimacy culminates in συναυλία, which means the sharing of a home, living side by side, associating, congregating—a relationship defined by physical proximity.

The interpretation advanced by the confirmation exercise follows the lead of Xenophon³⁸ and thus resembles in broad strokes the portrayal offered by some later western writers and artists, also inspired by Xenophon, who often downplayed the erotic dimension of the relationship of Zeus and Ganymede in favor of the view that Zeus was attracted to Ganymede's moral and spiritual qualities.³⁹ However, in these two Byzantine Greek exercises, the relationship is entirely one-sided: Zeus is in love, and Ganymede is the object of that love; Ganymede is not a subject who can love in return, a soul in search of the divine, a seeker after spiritual knowledge. This asymmetrical relationship of lover and beloved, of subject and object, is consistent both with the ancient Greek understanding of the *erastes–eromenos* relationship and with the ancient mythological tradition on the abduction of Ganymede, in which the agent and purpose of the abduction vary, but no source makes Ganymede a willing or eager participant. He is snatched up and carried off, terrified and sweating, in the clutches of the divine raptor; he does not actively clasp the eagle in return, much less ride on its back, as he does in some western art.⁴⁰

In this unique myth and its accompanying exercises, a Byzantine Greek rhetorician aims to suppress the sexual relationship of Zeus and Ganymede, but not by replacing it with or overlaying an allegory of 'higher love', as happens in the later western tradition. His main objective is a pedagogical one: to compose model refutation and confirmation exercises that allow him to demonstrate how to argue from etymology and from theological, moral, and physical allegory. Inspired perhaps by myths in which a god memorializes a slain human beloved by transforming their blood into a new flower, the author takes the foundational myth of Greek pederasty and reclaims it for his Christian classroom by inventing a new myth in which the story ends not in heaven but on earth. In the later western tradition, the viewer's eye is drawn upwards, as Ganymede, enraptured, ascends to the bliss of divine union; in these two Byzantine Greek exercises, by contrast, the viewer's eye is drawn down to the ground, where the sweat born of the boy's terror gives life to the first violet.

38 Xenophon, *Symposium* 8.28–30; see note 12.

39 For a brief overview of the reception history of Ganymede, see Solch, 'Ganymede'. See also the major studies of Barkan, *Transuming Passion*; J. M. Saslow, *Ganymede in the Renaissance: Homosexuality in Art and Society* (New Haven 1986); J. Boswell, *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Classical Era to the Fourteenth Century* (Chicago 1980) 250–61.

40 For Ganymede riding the eagle, see illustrations in Saslow, *Ganymede in the Renaissance*, 24, 129, 133, 165, 181, 183, 188, 189, 191.

Appendix: Translations of the Refutation and Confirmation of the Myth of Ganymede⁴¹

Refutation

(1) It is right to speak against everyone who dares to mythologize (μυθολογεῖν) the worst things against the gods, if in fact we do not intend to commit a nearly identical impiety against the gods, nor become accomplices to the profanity of these people. And it is right to refute everyone who dares to mythologize lies against the gods, but especially the man who blasphemed against Zeus. For inasmuch as Zeus is higher than all the other gods, it is even more fitting to refute those who blaspheme against him than those who blaspheme against the others. And various people have dared to say various things against Zeus, but the one who spoke falsely about his love for Ganymede has dared to say things harsher than all. For such things has he dared to say against him:

(2) Exposition: Ganymede, he says, was a very beautiful Trojan youth (μειράκιον ὀραιότατον). Zeus fell in love with him and, wishing to live with his beloved and supposing that he did not deserve to spend his life on earth, contrived the following, so that his beloved might spend his life with him in heaven. Taking the form of an eagle and coming to the mountains where the youth was herding sheep, he snatched him with his talons and bore him up into the air. Struck with fear, the youth dropped some sweat on the earth from above, and the earth received it and sent up a flower called the violet (ῖον). And this is what this man said falsely about the greatest of the gods, but we will prove in what follows that what he said is not true.

(3) Ganymede, he says, was a very beautiful Trojan youth. And how had Ganymede been born Trojan? For he got his name from ‘rejoicing in deliberations’ (τοῖς βουλευμασι χαίρειν), but the ability to deliberate has been allotted not to barbarians but to Greeks; for they are believed to share in both prudence (φρονήσεως) and the rest of education more than other peoples. Besides, it is not councils, but rather being in a flutter over love affairs, that is most natural for the beautiful. How, then, was Ganymede both very beautiful and at the same time ‘rejoicing in deliberations’?

(4) But grant that Ganymede was simultaneously able to deliberate, intelligent (συνετόν), one of the barbarians, and very beautiful: how is it, then, that Zeus fell in love with the youth and was seized with a desire (πόθος) for him? For passion (πάθος) is carnal, but the divine is believed to be incorporeal. If, then, Zeus is corporeal, how is he believed to be a god? But if he is incorporeal, how is he subject to bodily passions? Therefore, either Zeus is not a god, or, being a god, he never endured the experience of love.

(5) But grant that Zeus is both incorporeal and subject to bodily passions: how is it that he, being a god, did not fall in love with a god, but was seized with a love for human intercourse (ἀνθρωπίνης συνουσίας)? Or how was the youth not the one who fell in love with him? For the better do not fall in love with the worse, but the worse with the

41 For the Greek text, see John Doxapatres, *Rhetores Graeci*, ed. C. Walz, II (Stuttgart 1835) 349–53, 366–9. The section divisions are mine.

better. But if even being a god he was enslaved by a love for human intercourse, it was not likely for him to fall in love with a male, but with a female, unless⁴² those who say this nonsense believe that divinities are not only subject to love (ἐρωτικόν) but also corrupters of boys (παιδοφθόρον), and in this respect more wretched than even wretched men. Who, then, hearing that the greatest of the gods makes such mistakes, would not be swept away into wickedness and plunged headlong into utmost absurdity?

(6) But grant both that Zeus is subject to love and that, being a god, he is in love with human intercourse and is subject to the absurd practice of corrupting males (ἁρπνεοφθόρων): how is it, then, that he was not ashamed, being a god, of being in love with a mortal youth, and that he was not eager to conceal his passion, but wished openly to have intercourse with (συνεῖναι) and spend time with his beloved? Men in love with women feel shame and are eager to do what they do in secret, and yet [supposedly] a god was not ashamed of being in love with a mortal youth but, as it were, took pride in his passion and affected a solemn air about it. No, neither did Zeus, being a god, fall in love with a mortal youth, nor in loving him did he want to make himself conspicuous for his passion.

(7) But if he both fell in love with the youth and also wanted to have intercourse with the object of his desire (τῷ ποθομένῳ), it is not likely that he wanted to bring him to heaven, but that he let him remain on earth. For, first, it is in this way that Zeus was going to be conspicuous to both gods and mortals. For, if the youth was about to be removed from the world of men, he would have led those on earth to perceive the deed; but if, on the other hand, he was going to spend time with his lover in heaven, the absurd practice would have angered the gods. Next, it is also impossible for a corporeal being to dwell in heaven. For, just as life on earth is unsuitable for the incorporeal gods and is otherwise not fitting, so also for corporeal mortals a life in heaven becomes absolutely impossible.

(8) But how, being a god, did he change himself into the form of an eagle? For, if he was omnipotent, why did he not shoo the love away⁴³ from himself, instead of changing into an unreasoning nature (ἄλογον φύσιν)? But if he was enslaved to love to such an extent that he both transformed himself into unreasoning natures on account of it and also appeared as a bird on account of erotic desire (πόθον ἐρωτικόν), why do we not rather believe that Eros is the father, king, and highest of all the gods? For if Zeus is actually greater than all the other gods, he would never have become obedient to the rein (πειθήνιος) to the most shameful god of all, or, if he is inferior to the rest, it would be pointless to consider him as being above them all.

(9) Why, also, did he not change himself into a man instead of an eagle? For in this way⁴⁴ he would have frightened and alarmed the youth. But it was necessary to conciliate his beloved, not to frighten him.

42 'Unless': Walz has 'if' (εἴπερ, 351 line 12), but a negative is necessary for the sense.

43 'Shoo away' (ἁπεσώβει) is the word used elsewhere for shooing away birds.

44 I.e., in the form of an eagle.

(10) How, too, being an eagle, was he able to snatch the boy with his talons, drag him away from earth, and take him up into the air? For an eagle would perhaps have been able to snatch up a hare⁴⁵ or one of the other weakest and lightest animals from the earth, but no one has ever seen a human being carried upwards by an eagle.

(11) How, too, did the earth receive the boy's sweat and produce a flower in its place? What do a plant and sweat have in common, that a flower would grow up from sweat? But if they have nothing in common, how did the earth produce a flower grown up from sweat? For we know that plants grow from similar seeds.

(12) Let no one therefore believe such false statements, so that he may not by believing them be plunged headlong into the same impiety as those who have made them.

Confirmation

(1) Standing with those who know how to philosophize (φιλοσοφεῖν) the finest things, we deliberately choose to speak here in support of what they say, not because they have requested our help, but so that we ourselves, as well, may not seem to be talking nonsense similarly to those who speak against their opinions, and so that we may not by our silence be subjected to the accusations against these people. And I am ready to speak in support of all those who have said true and fitting things about the gods, but especially the one who philosophized about Zeus and Ganymede. For inasmuch as this man spoke better than the rest, I am most eager for speeches in support of what he has philosophized.

(2) And what does he say? Ganymede was a very beautiful Trojan youth. For it was necessary that Ganymede, being a youth, also be very beautiful. For humans who draw out their time as youths and those who are boys have natural beauty, but as they reach old age they cast it off and are turned into something rather ugly. Therefore, it is not unlikely that Ganymede, being a youth and especially being Trojan, was also very beautiful. And the proof of this is Paris Alexander, who himself was also born in Troy and was more beautiful than other men.

(3) But Zeus fell in love with Ganymede, being such as this. For it was necessary that Zeus, being a god and wiser than all the gods, rejoiced in Ganymede being wise (σοφῶ) and happening to be beautiful (ὡραῖω). For nothing is better than virtue. But of the virtues, in turn, the first and finest are naturally prudence (φρόνησις) and beauty (κάλλος). For just as prudence is the greatest virtue of the soul, so also beauty is agreed to be the best virtue of the body. If, then, virtue is better than everything that exists, and wisdom and beauty, in turn, are naturally the foremost of the virtues, it was likely that Zeus, being a god and a lover of beautiful things (τῶν καλῶν), fell in love with Ganymede, who happened to be wise and at the same time beautiful (ὡραίου). Being in love, he wished to be with (συνεῖναι) his beloved. For the things which someone hates, he also turns away from, but the things for which he has desire (πόθον), he also

45 'Hare': I emend Walz's πῶμα ('corpse', 352 line 25) to πῶκα.

welcomes dwelling with (συναυλίαν). So it was likely that Zeus, desiring beauty and wisdom (σοφίαν), also happened to aim at seeming to be beautiful (καλός) and wise.

(4) But believing life on earth to be unworthy [for Ganymede], he changed himself into an eagle and snatched Ganymede up into heaven, and naturally so. For when the things that Zeus desired happened to be not in heaven but on earth, and it was necessary, also, that he not mix them with the nature of the gods, he hurried so that the gods might not seem to be mortal in abandoning heaven and desiring life on earth, but instead so that he might allow them to remain in heaven and take up from earth to heaven the objects of their desire (τὰ ποθούμενα).

(5) Therefore, being a king, he also changed again into a kingly form. For Zeus is said to be king of all the gods, while the eagle, in turn, is believed to rule as king over the birds. It was necessary, then, that Zeus, being king of the gods, change himself into a different nature, as he wished to change into a kingly nature once again.

(6) When he became such, he snatched up the things that he desired. For the eagle is also otherwise a raptor and able to carry upwards anything that it wishes. But Zeus was at that time not only an eagle, but also a god. For he bore only the outward appearance of an eagle, but in all other respects he was Zeus and a god. So it was also very easy, because he had the power of an eagle and a god in the same creature, to take the youth up from earth to heaven.

(7) But struck with fear, the youth dropped sweat on the ground, and the earth received it and produced a flower, and naturally so. For it was necessary for Ganymede to become very timid and full of fear at the enormity of the act, and upon becoming so, to be seen dripping all over with sweat. For fear is accustomed to produce agony in the limbs, and the sweat is proof of this. It is likely, then, that Ganymede also became very timid as he was being snatched⁴⁶ up into heaven, and was dripping all over with sweat in his agony.

(8) And the fact that the earth, which received the moisture from his sweat, produced a flower is not incredible, since all other plants also do not otherwise naturally grow from earth unless the moisture of water comes together with the dryness of earth and causes their production. If indeed everything grows by the mixing of dry and wet, the fact that the violet was born as the common offspring of plants from earth and sweat confirms it.

(9) I both admire the one who has spoken on these points, and I censure those who speak against him.

46 'Snatched': I emend Walz's ἀσπάζόμενον ('greeting/kissing/embracing', 368 line 26) to ἀρπάζόμενον. The verb ἀρπάζω, which also appears at 350 line 12, 352 line 24, 352 line 27 (compounded with ἐξ-), and 367 line 30 and 368 line 12 (both compounded with ἀνα-), suits the argument much better here, as it describes a violent, terrifying abduction, not the friendly, loving greeting or embrace of ἀσπάζομαι. Moreover, since active forms of ἀσπάζω are not to be found in Byzantine texts outside of grammatical texts and lexica, ἀσπάζόμενον is unlikely to be a passive participle ('being greeted/kissed/embraced'), and a middle participle ('greeting/kissing/embracing') without an expressed object is rare. The only other instance of ἀσπάζομαι in these exercises means to 'welcome' (367 line 26).

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Submissions should be sent to:

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